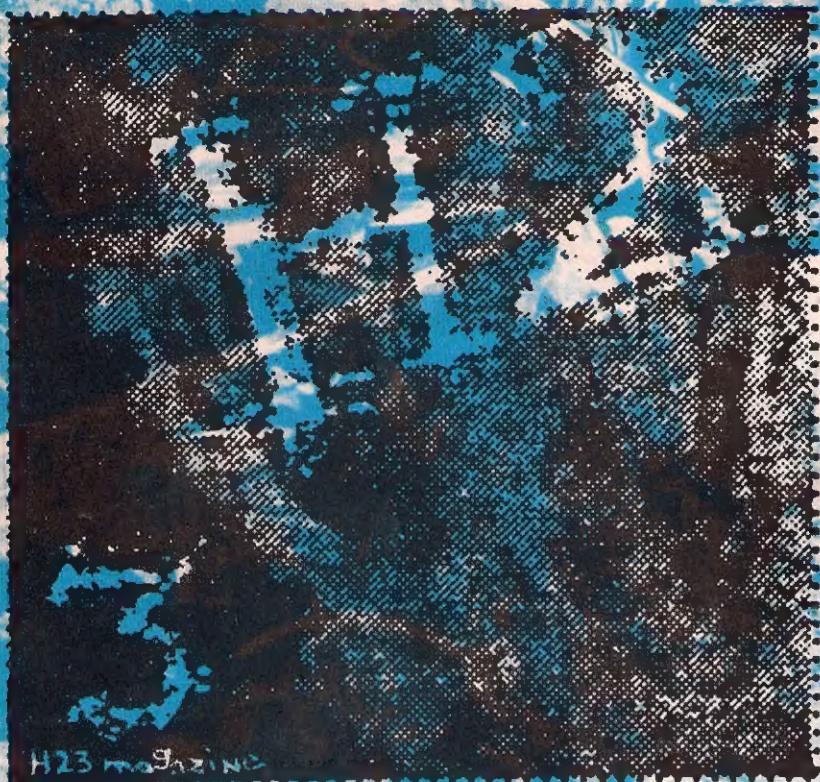


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4Editorial

Art vs. music—conversations with Carl Howard.

“Floating Concrete Octopus

Miekal And & Liz Was expose anart, plagiarism and noise.

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Warning: The layout of this issue is inconsistent
with our previous layout. Your comments are welcome.
Charity and readability are occasionally somewhat
sacrificed for self-indulgent “lazy day” cutting and
gluing. Your comments are welcome.

All forthcoming issues of H23 will include the
Retrospectiva column (see pages
34-38). Retro exists to document past
aesthetic
experiments
for collectors, historians,
researchers, and those who care to
remember. H23 welcomes ideas and
manuscripts for possible inclusion in Retro.

Last July, I chose not to interview **Carl Howard**, founder of the aT cassette label and sole musician behind the **NOMUZIC** name. After reading an article he wrote for **Electronic Cottage #1**, I made this decision on the grounds that he was more concerned with technique and acceptance than aesthetic considerations.

Within the many pages of Carl's reply, I found this message: "...let your readers decide how to delimit music and sound and art. You can't simply assume that they know where you stand, and that they automatically agree with you."

Well, let's clarify something. My intentions are to present a forum for certain kinds of music and art that I am personally interested in. With any luck, enough people will be intrigued by these things to warrant many years of H23. However, rather than widen my focus, I'll quit publishing altogether if the demand is not there.

Carl was correct in stating that I can't assume people know where I stand. What follows here is the correspondance between Carl Howard and I. He suggested turning the letters into a by-mail symposium, and I agreed. I thought you would benefit from multiple viewpoints and hopefully gain an understanding of the goals of H23. I'd appreciate any comments you have in response to this debate.

(Carl Howard, June, '89):

I definately want you to hold on to the tapes I gave you, and to tell your readers about them, and then to let them decide where they draw their own lines about music and sound art.

If you decline an interview with me, you might be missing an opportunity to expose one of the biggest areas of controversy since all this DIY activity began, which is that some people view putting noise on tape as music, and others as sound art, or whatever. I definitely think there is not the cross-purpose that you invision between your approach to sonic creation and mine. You probably don't realize that for two years I published ARTITUDE magazine, which was considered one of the most elitist and unflinchingly purist to have ever come down the pike. When I was in college, and then afterwards for a time, I considered "entertainment" a vile and hateful notion, the ultimate measure of consumer passivity, of the seperation of Creator and Spectator, of the Artist as Specialist.

Now my feelings have adapted themselves to the society we live in. I still firmly believe that entertainment is nothing more than passive reception, rather than active perception, and I prefer that creative endeavors exist in a communal environment in which invention invites reciprocal invention, in which work inspires work.

I know, however, that sometimes even the hoidiest of the toidiest are going to occasionally let their hair down and allow someone else to do the busy work. There's

nothing wrong with this. Specialization, however, is a more touchy matter. While I don't think that the model of the small (say tribal) community, in which one person becomes the sole representative of artistic endeavor, is a viable model for our modern culture, I nevertheless find, as someone who works in music, that there are going to be those who speak better, whose orientation is clearer, whose technique is superior.

Which means that if I have a choice between listening to electronic music by some kid who knows nothing about electronics and a lot about the Marquis de Sade, and an experienced innovator like Richard Franecki, I'm going to go for Franecki every time. I know that his music is never going to bullshit me. As for the other kid, I may wish him well, but I would probably have nothing to learn from him. This does not mean that all Franecki is concerned with is "entertainment". That is a mistake made by those who persist in maintaining an "either/or" stance to everything, in order to delimit themselves, and in order to keep their noses clean. A composer is concerned with his composition and/or his performance. Entertainment is solely the judgement of the spectator.

So please don't get the impression, because of what I said in Electronic Cottage #1 (which was really about indie musicians getting past their collective fears of

"big" vs. "small" and simply coming to terms with the real society in which music is played, re-played, and appreciated--and that doesn't only mean money), that the music I'm putting out is only by those musicians who want to please people. In fact, if you checked, I'm sure you'd find that Paul Lemos (featured in H23 #1) is more concerned with pleasing people than any of the artists on my label, NONE of whom have disco singles on WaxTrax.

letter from carl howard, continued

Okay. So since I was also the publisher of a periodical dedicated to indie music, I'm certainly not going to dictate editorial policy to you. No fucking way would I do such a thing. But what I am saying is that the music represented on my label is there to present a choice--an alternative. And even if most of the artists consider their work to be music (a result of the equation of composition, form and technique) this does not necessarily pit them against those who claim they are experimenters who do art for art's sake--those who are simply making "artistic statements" as you call them. Those who do approach art in this more temporary way may have much to say that is important or at least valid, but in the long run the culture as a whole is best served by those who strive for a bit more, who put a bit more into what they have. As you do. That's why you want your magazine to look focused and well-organized, and not like a haphazard collection of xerox sheets, like some of the mags I see.

Technique is central to the notion of art, and it has to do with quality. It has to do with the artist living in a real community where creativity develops and not simply living in a vacuum. It has to do with how much you strive. This is why it is so

important. I just don't

understand why some people come up to me so vehemently every time I pull out the word TECHNIQUE. If you drive a car and you don't have technique, you could find yourself splattered into a building. If you walk and you don't have technique, your head could be an open coconut on the sidewalk. Why should artists be different? Why should it be wrong for artists to develop what everyone else requires in order to do what they do? I never have understood this; perhaps you can explain it to me.

In reality, sound does not define music any more than music defines sound, but a schism

has

developed between those who claim they are in one camp and not the other, and the bitter rivalry remains, between these two self-imagined camps. Meanwhile, the Big Boys just look on and laugh, because as far as they can see, neither camp can get its shit together. It's really time for all

(Ron Rice, July, '89): I apologize, Carl, for stepping on your "technical" toes. My choice of words was not faithful to the point I was trying to make. My argument is not against experienced innovators per se, and I was wrong to debate aspects of your article out of context. I would agree that the "experienced" can often teach us a lot. My either/or stance, as you put it, does not translate as experience vs. inexperience, but rather as art vs. entertainment.

Try to see it this way... At one end of the sonic spectrum, you have pure, un-hitched expression (feedback music, for instance). At the other end lies pure entertainment—non-creative, expression of nothing but the desire to party (Bon Jovi, Madonna, etc.). There is, of course, the hazy center region occupied by artists and musicians who lace their creativity with enough entertainment to make it somewhat accessible and sellable. This is where the bulk of the underground lives, labelling themselves hardcore, or industrial-dance, or whatever. You see,

these silly semantic barriers to be broken down, wouldn't you say? Beyond merely the work that one does, the social aspect in which the work and the worker exist has to be considered. And so again it's not only a question of what you can say, but how well you can say it. This is why, ultimately, I'm going to a musician to hear music, to a noise baby to hear noise, and to a book if I want to learn about de Sade. The social aspect of creative endeavor tells me that uncalled-for exhibitions of violence and deviancy over background of incomprehensible sound do nothing for a culture that is already riddled with self-destructive violence. But the inspiration of the dedicated composer, painter, dancer, filmmaker--these will always have something to say.

furious at people for condemning these more admittedly traditional artistic values. But conservative I'm really not, and art-fascist I'm certainly not, so these days I try not to expect anything more from people than they would themselves. So I want to remain upbeat with you. I think there is enough meat to this argument for you to consider devoting space to it, or even some kind of by-mail symposium on it, with many views on the issue being presented. In the long run, you'd be doing your readers a greater service than if you ignore the societal impact of the artwork you're talking about and just continue to talk about one artist and one product at a time.

In the meantime, again, please keep the tapes and let your readers decide how to delimit music and sound and art. You can't simply assume that they know where you stand, and that they automatically agree with you. You'll benefit by widening the spectrum of the topic, while still remaining true to your focus. And other such buzzwords.

CHEERZ, Ron Boy.

There are a number of reasons to blend "music" with raw experimentation. As such, many musicians choose this direction, many hundreds of fans listen to their music, and many magazines write about it. The main reason I decided to publish, however, was to provide a much deserved forum for artists who work outside the realm of traditional/accepted formats.

The distinction is often a vague one, and nothing but a subjective decision on my part will often draw the line in H23. You pointed out that Paul Lemos has a disco single on WaxTrax, but that doesn't diminish the fact that his main mode of expression is a unique blend of historical perspective and post-industrial experimentation. As far as your music is concerned, it is my opinion that there is a strong intention to create a music that people will like. In fact, you've stated that you have adapted yourself to the society we live in. Perhaps the goal of challenging the "straights" and "playing ball with the big boys" is a noble one, but it strays from my intentions as an editor. Having published **ARTITUDE**, surely you realize that not everyone shares your goal of social acceptance. I disagree with your notion that technique is central to the concept of art. Technique is central to design. And art is the variation from design. Sure, technique is important when driving a car or laying out a magazine, but these things are not art—they are utilitarian in nature. Experimentation, deviation, abnormality—these things produce an aesthetic and establish the parameters of the "art". There are many artists who choose to express their ideas as if no one else necessarily had to listen—as if there was no such thing as a commercial purpose to art (such as to make money or give people something to dance to).

(Carl Howard,
August, '89)

When I was publishing arti-
tude/audiophile magazine,
I was accused of being an
elitist; okay, so they
weren't entirely wrong.

Editorially, my position was unyieldingly irascible.
Everything was evil. Pop was evil. Egoism in music was evil. Stuffiness was evil. Eclecticism was evil. And everything else was either naive, or the True Way.

But that was all before I started playing music myself.
I began making electronic music and electronic rock music because I liked it best, and because the possibilities

it offered, musically--not economically, seemed greatest. I still hold to this. But I have unwittingly come full circle, because now for the first time I have been accused of becoming a POPULIST!!!

You, Ron, have made a judgement and an out-of-hand dismissal of my music because what little you heard used drum machines and sequencers; based upon this and some comments by myself lifted out of context, you have determined that what I am now after is *mass appeal*--that I have thrown down the banner of intellectual eclecticism to make dance fodder for the proles.

What you don't

KNOW is that it is actual-
ly possible to like these
styles of music and ex-
pression without merely
being one of the *soulless
many*.
What you also don't know
is that to me the only ban-
ner of consequence is that
of progressive music, and
of electronic music in par-
ticular.

What

you also
don't
know
is that I
work with
many
styles of
electronic
music,
some dron-
ey,

some
noisy, and
some rock
based, but
ALL called
NOMUZICb
because to
me every
kind of el-
ectronic
music is
important.

It is sufficient for me
that the people I network
my music to think the mu-
sic is good and that I am
doing it well. Very obvi-
ously, if it had ever been
my intention to make the
music as broadly accept-
able as possible, I would
have failed miserably, be-
cause my music hardly
ever gets reviewed, let
alone played!

As early
as the first
issue of
arti-
tude, in an
article
stating the
publications'
s purpose,
I stated
that it did
not matter
what style
a musician
chose to

play; what mattered was
what he had to say, and
how well he articulated it.

(carl, continued)

If I happened to find that a range of ideas that a particular artist put forward seemed interesting, I would allow for the free play of ideas and speculation upon these ideas, within the pages of the magazine. Thus certain concepts that I stated about Viscera, Elliot Sharp, and Gerechtigkeits Liga, for example, may not have originated with the artists, but I felt that the implications of their own ideas were striking enough that they deserved mention; even disco hounds like SPK and Cabaret Voltaire received fair dissertations about their respective methodologies, not because of their popularity, but because there was something beneath the glitz exterior which was stimulating, which

brought the listener out of their passivity and into a state in which creative reciprocity existed between performer and audience, finally reducing the distance which our consumer society has placed between these two parties. To me there is something suspect about the need to automatically dismiss certain styles of music as inferior because they are tied to commercialism.

You provided me with a key, Ron, when you indicated that "Technique is central to design, and art is the variation from design." You eliminated a central issue in the duality that exists in the world's perception of art/creative endeavor. You are talking about the Western, European, intellectual

tradition of art, the very one which has resulted in the distancing of artist and audience, as opposed the Black, African tradition of performance, which is spontaneous and communal, and in particular non-intellectual.

Technique is not central to design; it is central to execution. Any player knows this. Neither is technique divorced from theory; neither is Black music divorced from the intellectual process. For reference I point you to the studious endeavors of African-American musicians named John Coltrane, Charles Mingus, George Lewis, and Anthony Braxton, all of whom were criticized by Black conservatives for being too European!

continued on page 33

Miekal And & Elizabeth Was

"An anartist," says Liz, "takes the slashed circle A, reslashes it, turns it upside down, redraws it in beach sand, then sinks her toes in it." Miekal And and Elizabeth Was are writers, publishers, musicians/composers, festival organizers, performance artists, and most of all enjoyers of a contemporary prophetic/aesthetic lifestyle. It will be evident from the following interview that this prolific duo (now a trio with the additional collaborations of their young son, Lilaizon) have much to say about modern underground creativity. "Or why not call it the experimental above-ground," they suggest...

Xeroxial Endarchy, 1341 Williamson, Madison, WI 53703

H23 Humans of the late 20th century have grown accustomed to "art as product" rather than "art as expression of whatever". What steps can be taken to reverse this progression, or is this evolution a good thing?

Miekal

The appearance of technology at the beginning of the century spawned a popular avant garde. Because objects & information could be created, processed & distributed with ever increasing efficiency, the divisions between mass culture & fringe culture were more drastically enforced than ever before in history. The "fringe" suggests multiple realities having very little if any reference to the mainstream. We know from history that it is possible to maintain a consistently radical cultural identity, that one has some choice of environs & actions. Likewise "art as product" & "art/life/process" are separated by spectacular walls of critical theory & proselytizing & it has come that each have wholly different

criteria for existing. Also these opposing ideas have been around long enough that they have evolved many hybrid combinations.

While I hardly ever think about the mechanics of process anymore, I have spent many years gleaning historical information about artists' behavior, ideas, legend, influence, visions. By continually collecting this information, one is able to compile a massive vocabulary of options from which to choose. It is a method which often defies classification, because it continually draws from everything possible. The amount of taste & decision or randomness is very personal, each being having a different brain full of options.

I have very little problem with

the course which mass culture has selected because a lot of the elements of it which the avant garde perceive as negative will eventually self-destruct ...

Liz

The notion of "art as expression" still has its hold on the average art consumer, who automatically asks of an artwork "What is the artist trying to express here?" From the mere asking of the question, they begin to depart from the piece itself (especially if the art is non-representational), trapped further & further in the limitations of their own thought-patterns & experience. Our public ritual-improvisation Festival of the Swamps still fresh in my head, I hear the same kinds of questions asked: "What is this all about?" "What group are you with?" "What's the meaning behind this?" "Is this an anti-war

demonstration?" "Is this some kind of ethnic celebration?" People think they need & assume they have a right to demand a simple logical answer to these types of questions. If an artwork makes them uncomfortable because it is not immediately apparent "what the artist is trying to express," then nearly any short clear answer will appeal to them.

If I answer, "This is pure uninhibited expression of who & what I am," they will go away content but having missed the point.

The point being that in many cases, there is no intended point to an artwork, no one idea or emotion being expressed, but rather a concatenation of ideas & feelings, interaction of materials & methods, experiments in approach, whole personal histories that go into the making of any piece. And even when it is a simple case of an "emotion being expressed," the viewer might get something else out of it anyway. "What does this artwork do to me?" "How does it make me feel?" "What does it incite me to do?" These are the kinds of questions art audiences & artists alike should ask. "Art as stimulus" we might call it. Whether the work is sold, traded, shown or burned is another subject altogether.

H23 What is anart anyway?

Miekal

anartist, anartistry, anart, anartism: Originally a portmanteau word combining the words/ideas of anarchy & art or artist coined by Liz Was in 1987. It has come to suggest a hyper----ization of action/ideas/behavior & a participation in cultural intervention. Noise in all its forms is the polylanguage of the anartist. Where anart sounds like anarch or anyart or inert.

Anaristic refers specifically to a notion of cultural anarchy which is improvised ritual & intuitive responses to acquired cultural tastes. I think the most radical thought/material contemporary to our planet is noise. & by noise I mean all kinds of noise; architectural noise, paint noise, sculptural noise, behavioral noise, idea noise, graffiti noise, language noise, xerox noise, psychic noise, computer noise.... Our experiment is to invent tactics & strategies which are operable in a world of all possible noises. The year 2000 is only minutes away & our modes of thinking are entrenched in western industrial rationalism. Our form of anarchy is reconstructive. It takes all the possible noises & words & mixes them into the widest imaginable vocabulary from which we chose our actions & ideas.

Liz

Anarchists at our recent Festival of the Swamps expressed their politics with noise & body paint as strange creatures while artists barked out controversy in public. A challenge to the protesters & other negators to stop complaining & DO. The possibilities for constructive trouble making are endless when you combine these two realms. Imagine a

cop bashing a huge frog over the head in the midst of a protest, one could play into the sympathies of the stupid mass audience. Seriously, "the revolution" must be cultural as well as political, & it has already begun.

H23 When is plagiarism an art (or anart)? Is It in the creator's intentions? In the new context of the piece? Is it important to make this distinction?

Liz

"What did the author intend to convey?" This itself is a plagiarised question which reeks of grammar school & misses the point of multimethodology. Did I intend to use blue paint before I chose that color or was the intention in the very moment of choosing? Regardless of intention, we expand our vocabulary to include all which has already existed. The politically correct way of talking about plagiarism is RECYCLING. New combinations of old ideas in unexpected old contexts. How new is infinity?

If it were important to make the distinction between "new" & plagiarized, plagiarism would be a fruitless endeavor. Pointing over Motherwell's shoulder to the shade of blue repeated for the second time. Plagiarize yourself.

Miekal There are infinite plagiaristic & mimetic responses to art/life. Of course the bickering & in fighting come when critics try to superimpose aesthetics on the plagiarist impulse. I plagiarize to regenerate information & images & sounds which have become lost or forgotten. To appropriate recognizable cliche images (such as Warhol & the Marilyn Monroe image, or the mail art network & Reagan's face) holds no interest for me.

I'm

interested in an intense multiple fragmentation which draws from my own subconscious thought pool & whatever synchronously found materials appear at the time of creation.

In the realm of sound & noise, because of sampler & computer technology, it is necessary to establish a workable relationship with plagiarism. The record industry has spent millions of dollar to implant an awesome morality in the public's self-consciousness, for fear that its aural cliches will be coopted. Through radio, live performance & recordings, the underground can feed incessantly upon the paranoia of ownership & originality. For the recording industry there is an incredible machinery to sustaining its illusion of popularity & importance. As individuals realize that technology has made their musical heros into an exploitable economy. Anyone can generate any variety of sounds into their environment without having to bow to endless consumption.

One could plagiarize out of lack of creativity, even to replace creativity with a science of cloning. Or the possibility of plagiarism is an inspiring discovery. In 1978 I wrote a whole book in the course of a night, laying in the bed of a women who had died there a year earlier. I heard clearly her words in my head & transcribed them as they came. This form of subtle psychic replication was my first profound plagiarist experience. Because I have included plagiarism in my form of creativity for more than 10 years, its presence has become more invisible while becoming no less influential.

Miekal

H23 Many would argue that the computer has had an adverse effect on art, music, publishing, etc.--reducing creativity to mindless tapping at the keyboard. Where can experimentation and real human expression exist in a cyberworld? Is this a case of "know your enemy"?

Up until a year or so ago, I was an aggressive anti-technologist. I railed against computers & their bland & generic procreation. After spending a major part of the last year learning & understanding their viability, I've come to a much different rationale. I think computers are foremost a tool, like a typewriter or a xerox machine or a doorbell. While they do contain the possibility of artificial intelligence & decision-making, this is still a high-tech proposition. So really, computers are an extension of artistry, they don't replace artistry. Someone who is going to shit out endless dreck on the computer is the same person who already has those values.

For us at Xeroxial, buried by networking information, paperwork, & information storage, the computer animated our whole operation so as to free us with a bit more time for our own work. It's our experimental mule & it shoulders a tremendous burden. On the other hand, the computer makes it possible to do forms of animation, interactive hypermedia¹, graphics, word & text generation, sampling, font design, & visual poetry which would take an inordinate amount of time & energy by hand. It simulates the simple logic of mechanics & thus transforms physical energy into mental equilibrium.

¹ Simply stated, hypermedia is the ability of any object, idea or sound to be linked to or associated with any other reference. Computer is the metaphor for the most fully realized intermedia machine & the human mind is the explicit model for the computer. In the last few years computers have developed a stunning (and problematic) interface to enable crossmedia

referencing & associations. Imagine creating a disk of sounds that at any point the listener would be able to participate in, in a one-on-one audio experience. Each time the act of listening would become an interactive event. This metaphor could easily be extended to include many listeners in many different locations simultaneously. Up till now the only option a listener is offered is to change the speed, put scratches in the recording or shut the thing off.

These possibilities have shifted the actuality of artistic culture toward a truly multi-referential, whole-brained connectivity. It also leads those interested participants far away from the linear cultural astigmatism of mass electronic culture.]

Something to be aware of is that while computers can advance the cause of experimentation & dissemination, the straight world can use the same machinery to reduce individuality & human rights to a mere set of statistics. But as phenomena such as computer viruses have demonstrated, information processing is a very vulnerable & subvertible medium. Computers can distort & reverse computers. Not computer wars but waging computer collisions of contradictory information. Reverse computer muzak with computer noise, computer government with computer anarchy. Computers are a symbolic language which has a relationship to logics of implementation, not to right & wrong, acceptable & un.

H23 The Zaumists have influenced your work-- particularly EUY. For those that aren't familiar with it, can you give a synopsis of zaumist history/philosophy and/or direct us to sources of info?

Miekal
Zaum was a loose-knit group of radical Eastern European artists whose work was in the spirit of the international dada & futurism. The activity began around 1912 or so & flourished until the early 20s, tho several of the original group lived into the 60s. In fact we are in contact with a group of Russian artists, whose work is directly influence by early Zaum. Zaum roughly translates as "beyond sense" & many of their handmade books & prints were full of neologisms & non-sense syllables as well as abstract graphics.

Much of Zaum was a reaction to the rigid orthodoxy of the Russian language, & in fact the group's interest seemed to be in establishing an international language of sounds & syllables.

Since very little is written about Zaum, it has been nearly erased from the cultural record. "The Look of Russian Literature" by Gerald Janecek, Princeton University Press, 1984 is the best reference for finding out details & seeing examples. There is also in existence a microliche collection of 54 books from that period compiled by Susan Compton, author of "The World Backwards". & finally the Ruth & Marvin Sackner Archive of Visual & Concrete Poetry in Miami Beach, FL actually own a number of the books & it is possible to actually arrange to see them.

H23 With any luck, "NOISE" will continue to be an underlying theme of H23. It warrants considerable exploration.

Miekal

Noise is the international language, easily understood or processed beyond any boundary of dialect or orientation. The sound of walking, radio static, a ratchet, a bellowing tube share an index of understandings in the universal & collective experience.

Noise is the most directly radical & confrontative cultural phenomenon available. If anything, I think the human species believes it can breed the effects of noise out of existence simply by pretending it doesn't exist. This process of shutting out makes humans psychically & emotionally less sensitive to basic materials of their surroundings. Imagine the millions of people in NYC who have never heard the 10,000 sounds of the city.

Noise is the experience & produkt of listening...or trying not to listen.

Both internal & external psychoacoustic phenomena create interference partitioning which divert or cancel receptivity. Some percentage of noise is always intrinsic to audibility. In fact noise with no negative connotation is merely sound. If the listener is not annoyed, distracted, confused or overwhelmed, it couldn't be noise? A reconstructed definition of noise would be an inclusive reminder of the endless varieties of infiltration for which noise is accountable.

Noise art is the acceptance of all contradictory information as a source of usable energy. Within our lifetime we will see noise-to-energy converters which will recycle our planet's most unused resource. But until art & science collaborate enough to further understand & invent such a future, this idea remains a dream.

"In the classical age, for the first time, madness was perceived through a condemnation of idleness and in a social immanence guaranteed by the community of labor. This community acquired an ethical power of segregation, which permitted it to eject, as into another world, all forms of social uselessness. It was in this *other world*, encircled by the sacred powers of labor, that madness would assume the status we now attribute to it. If there is, in classical madness, something which refers elsewhere, and to *other things*, it is no longer because the madman comes from the world of the irrational and bears its stigmata; rather, it is because he crosses the frontiers of bourgeois order of his own accord, and alienates himself outside the sacred limits of its ethic."

Michel Foucault, "Madness & Civilization"

For instance, psycho-medicine has consistently neglected the effects of psychic & emotional noise on the human apparatus. Research into the qualities of noise which have been given extreme negative connotations such as confusion, multiple fragmentation, chaos, & misinformation will reveal that the cause is the cure.

POLY NOISE

The intermedia of noise is visual noise, architectural noise, radio & tv noise, movement noise, information noise, historical noise, word noise & maybe sound noise. Every possible composite is only more evidence of the permanent permutation of qualitative noise. Divided by intrinsic differentials one noise bombarded against its opposite will not produce an anthem. The noisiest anthem imaginable is the sound of all sounds. Nothing dare be excluded from a matter of fact description of the sonosphere.

One must raise the question "does the present human aural anatomy efficiently assimilate every imaginable noise at all time?" Certainly the ear & its parts are minutely capable of processing, but the socialized brain socket might be suspect, after so many years of being taught to gather & listen in an orderly, perceptible & linear fashion, which could only parallel ignoring as much as is attended to. The brain receptor literally screens & selects the audio spectrum choosing only the most desirable sound information, & banishing the unwanted noise to be forgotten. So it is the internal apparatus which is designed to malfunction in these post-Cagean years. The human is stuck with a brain that is too full to begin with; compressed, compacted, condensed. Its subjective formulation had induced a profound dystrophy, a condition of late 20th century behavior. Incessant rumination has left the brain hollow & unable to function with spontaneity & simultaneity. The critique of civilized man's reaction to noise is formidable, yet often there is even a struggle to enter the discourse from the beginning since noise is almost always unwanted. So the critique begins with perceptive reorganization, establishing an active vocabulary/language of noise which would allow it maximum utility. Particularly its harshest components such as volume, chaos, distortion, feedback, static, drone, etc need be viewed as enduring, or even as a form of global resolution. That indeed noise is the very nature of existence itself & it is the vast formula of planetary celebration. It needn't be pedestalized nor removed. Let's offer the prospect that absolute theoretical silence is noise, as well. Beyond

The most unwanted byproduct of population is noise. Its want & utility have imploded within its availability. That noise is a weed to be plowed under, for hope of a flower later, that a planet so wealthy with a resource that is pungent with chaotic bits of info could rhetorically sacrifice it to the distant surroundings, to the recent past. Noise is a food like oxygen, or is a piece of information like the mail, or an emotional gamut such as crying or fucking.

noise is something more dangerous & powerful & that is psychic interference, information dyslexia, cultural virus, amnesia &c. These neuro-states exist at the edges of noise consciousness, wholly unexplored & contemporary phenomena. Again the negative connotation is derogatory but this may be because they have parallel qualities which are destructive or constructive. So the model of the human cognitive apparatus is a spiral whose components continue further into the unspecified & subtle topology of the mind. Noise has always been a figment of the mind, the embodiment of beyond sense. (The Russian futurists had a word for beyond sense; ZAUM, which referred to a trans-rational language.)

To describe globularity without noise as an essential resource is no longer possible. Civilization has now exhausted most of its non-renewable energy & has invested nothing toward technology appropriate to the conversion of noise into an international energy & initiative. Simply for the global exchange of information, noise is conspicuously apropos. Beyond dialect yet suggestively communicable, it is a direct transmission, acculturated to specific ambiguity. It speaks to or thru a possible understanding, catalyzing disparate info & imagery. Categorical noise is a program of thoughts, conceptual noise is an imaginative omnibus of investigations. An impoverished listener would likely become numb to the invariability & the repetitive, would sleepwalk endlessly & think in predictable motor rhythms. A concerted attention to noise phenomena would defeat that spell, offer a propulsion within the interior of hyper action. The affection of noise inseminates a non-emotional life force.

Polymedia of noise is captivated from random capitulation, from personal control of problematic layers of hearing. One is dunked into a sink or swim situation from birth. There is an immediate buoyancy, it is possible to steer one's way into an understanding of sonic occurrence. All sounds are disjointed but may also coincide if given enough space to breath.

H23 anything on your mind(s) lately

There is a word in my zaum book EUY, **cassetropy**, which suggests a phobia which many audio noise artists have to constantly encounter & deal with. It has a double meaning. The first is that for some the cassette represents a mark of achievement, a *trophy*, a magical & spontaneous transformation which temporarily preserves specific memories of sound. The second meaning describes artists (& radio djs) who feel that the cassette is an *atrophied* version of a more "professional" commodity such as records or CDs.

Miekal

It is interesting that one occasionally runs into artists who first began distributing their work on cassettes but having succeeded elsewhere in the new music hierarchy, they have renounced cassettes & even networking as inferior to the business of music.

For me the beauty of cassette technology is that it is available to almost everyone, they are audio xerox machines which allow cheap & easy reproduction & most importantly make everyone more equal than previous. With the coming of cheap digital cassettes, the resistance to cassette sound will weaken considerably, particularly since the type of degeneration inherent in analogue tape dubbing will be non-existent in digital sound.

H23 You've mentioned that artists should be more involved in review/critique. Do you care to elaborate on that thought?

I think the whole concept of "review" or "critique" needs to be re-examined & re-defined, especially when it relates to experimental work. A piece which, for example, challenges the notion of "taste," "beauty," or "meaning" cannot be judged in those same terms. I prefer to think such pieces are better simply described with as little value judgement & as impersonally as possible. But this skirts a more important question, which is whether "value" can be applied at all to experimental work & if so, what are its criteria? I can say of one of my own pieces "that is some of my best work," yet I have learned that years later I might finally understand & appreciate a piece I had always hated. Which leads to the thought, is there more value in the artist's own critique of his/her work than that of the audience or the critic?

Critics & reviewers should have an informed sense of the history of the artform they are reviewing, better they should have worked with it themselves. I think the work of an artist who is him/herself informed about what has already been done will produce work of greater value in the sense of the evolution of art, but that doesn't detract from the value of an experimenter who has never been to a library, or who is otherwise working in isolation from the world. So the historical sense is helpful but not crucial.

A critic needs to be sensitive & open to vibration itself, to detect aliveness in art, for this I feel is of value. (But then is an experiment in dryness or a conscious attempt at expressing boredom necessarily valueless?)

I believe that in theory all experiments are valid (that is, as much is learned from the experiments that fail as from those that succeed) & yet I can still point to a certain set of experimenters whose work I can say is definitely important, of "more value" than some others'. But now we are talking about the artist rather than the artwork, (as if the two could be separated?) Ideally, the critic should be informed about the artist's entire body of work & his/her personal art history. Then a new criteria is posited: is the artist growing, his/her work changing, evolving?

Growth, change, evolution, aliveness: perhaps botanists ought to review works of art. Certainly there are too many white-faced critics out there writing in dry language about the resurrected work of dead white men. How do you critique growth in a swamp? Is the bright orange creature better than the slimy brown one? Is survival a criteria, i.e. does the artist who is committed, who "sticks with it" year after year of more value than one who "dabbles" for awhile, & then goes back into engineering full time? Or the work of one who "shits it out" of less value than the work that was labored over for months?

In asking myself these questions, I always tend to answer, no, one thing is ultimately no more important than the next. What is important is the fact that so many different artists, approaches to art, & artworks do exist, that they all have the opportunity to exist, especially in this age of accessible tools like cassette decks, personal computers, & video cameras. Every reviewer of experimental work should help educate his/her audience about experimentation itself, its history & context. The review should not be a critic, but more like a news reporter who simply & objectively describes a piece (in the case of a performance, acting as a witness to an event), &, in the role of educator, puts it in a historical context, describing facts, for example about relevant art movements past & current. The role or reviewer as educator has problems, however, as in the obsessive habit of reviewer to "cite influences." Even when they further elaborate these claims with historical information, these usually derive from associative & personal assumptions which are often off the mark. Here in Madison, Miekal & I are at the point where we wretch at the mention of "Dada" just because it is used recklessly to describe our public performance work again & again. This is not much worse, however, than the "sophisticated" critic from the Village Voice, whose review does more to show off his/her hip & informed references & vocabulary than it does to talk about the piece itself.

Here's a challenge to reviewers: try to do a review without comparing or referring the work to anything else.

Wherever possible, & this should go without saying, I think the reviewer should talk to the artist(s) before writing a review. At least then they can give personally relevant references & historical information. And don't have to guess at the "artist's intention," if any. And can learn exactly what concepts, methods or materials were used instead of just guessing.

"As a painter, I've always been attracted to music that possessed qualities well beyond traditional song forms, be those qualities structural, rhythmic, timbral, or poetic. If it could challenge or avoid clichés, then it could also grab my attention."

and Cage; all widely divergent in sensibility, yet all sharing the desire to create new sounds for modern ears. I found it strange that the aural phenomena they'd been grappling with had



"This led me, appropriately enough, to the joys of early Cabaret Voltaire, Throbbing Gristle, and SPK; all of whom sought to incorporate dissonant electronics into sobering performance art."

Arthur Potter

"As technologies became cheaper and more efficient, the cassette culture reared its head (no pun intended) from the underground.

yet to find a large contemporary audience, even if in another context. Their sounds and ideas were certainly both compelling and exciting."

What

once seemed a rarified, academic, and rather expensive pursuit, became a kind of burgeoning folk form. Yet unlike other folk arts, authenticity was sometimes traded for pretense as technology overtook ideas."

"Through various avenues, I managed to find musicians and artists that were doing exciting, personal work. Most of those people appear on the Discordia/Concordia compilation: Croiners, John Wiggins, Tim Story, Maybe Mental, J. Greinke, Randy Greif, and Paul Lemos/Controlled Bleeding. After listening to and seeing so many quickly tossed together compilations, I felt that I had constructed a well-designed and consistently listenable project. The response to it was inspirational"



*My correspondence with Masami Akita (Merzbow)

"Perhaps my most consistently satisfying aesthetic dialogue and subsequent friendship has been with Paul Lemos. We struck up a steady correspondance somewhere between Controlled Bleeding's first and second albums. Time spent together resulted in a fruitful exchange of ideas, both musical and visual. The bulk of my album design work has been done through Paul, so obviously his critical eye is a welcome ingredient in that process. Paul and



I have also had the opportunity to work together in the studio, producing a track entitled "w/commercials". As we were both quite satisfied with that piece, more spoken-word recordings are a distinct possibility. The shared input and change of context made this a very unusual collaboration for me."

followed, and culminated in a stateside visit, an

interview, and our collaborative package titled

Severances. It was originally to be a sound-

text project, but that plan changed when

translation of my poetry into Japanese

proved a difficult task. I ended up again as

the visual designer, while Masami provided

a full sixty-minute sonic barrage."

"Speaking of context, a kind of balancing act takes place in my visual art output. Most of my visual design or "commercial" work has been a playful yet somber brand of representationalism. Perhaps it is here that I try to project the stripped-down theatricality of Caravaggio (I've become a definite Italophile through marriage and travel) into the world of objects. My so-called "serious" paintings are entirely abstract, and should be considered

Arthur Potter:Design/ Illustration

Core LP (Subterranean/
USA)-controlled bleeding
Curd LP (Dossier/W Germany)-controlled bleed-
ing

Dry Lungs III LP (Place-
bo/USA)-various artists
Dry Lungs IV LP (Place-
bo)-various

Flatland postcard (Banned
Production/USA)-amk/
pgr/aem

Fragment #1 tape pack-
age (ND/USA)-j.

greinke/pierre perret
GAG LP (Materiali So-
noro/Italy)-controlled
bleeding

Halved LP (Placebo)-
controlled bleeding/
maybe mental

A Retrospective LP (Sub-
terranean)-controlled
bleeding

Sludge LP (Dossier)-paul
lemos

Songs from the Drain LP
(Dossier)-controlled
bleeding

Testament LP (RRR/
USA)-various

Testament limited boxset
w/print (RRR)-various

Text #1 tape package
(Banned Production)-

whitehead/blackhumour

Tides of Heaven 7" (KK/
Belgium)-controlled
bleeding

The Wound Deepens tape
insert (Harsh Reality/
USA)-various



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process
continues.
.."

Arthur Potter: Discordia/Concordia releases

Discordia/Concordia c-60 and visuals

package-various

Severances c-60 and visuals package-
society for cutting up merzbow(a joint
release with ZSF/Japan)

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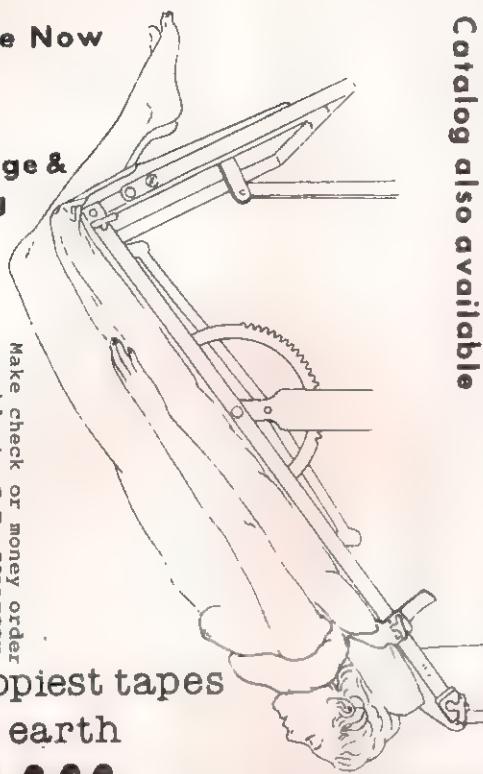
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FLEENER

Sleep Chamber has been pumping out confrontational music and video since 1982. Often erotic in form and content, their work ranges from industrial to ethereal to downright musical. This is an interview with John Zewizz, bandleader and man of emotion and honesty.

Sleep Chamber

now; a sea green airtight room with; an unwholesome thought
now; two women one inside one outside; an unwholesome thought
now; Governor requested that this be v; an unwholesome thought
now; inside one wears red heals had a fun d; an unwholesome thought
now; these people have been have been building a ramp; an unwholesome thought
now; you looking for signs of the invisible; an unwholesome thought
now; pick up pickin' up chicks eat a chicken; an unwholesome thought
now; the one outside will watch the one inside; an unwholesome thought
now; then follow and later be removed; an unwholesome thought
now; throne toilet e-chair, purple foam sputtering; a nun who
now; through a length of surgical tube; a nun who nude knew
now; you fill a role you leave a whole; nude nuns knew who
now; BONES OF IRON::BLOOD OF ACID; knew nude nuns who
now; you leave a hole you fill a role; who knew nude nuns
now; and then there is a place where you feel at home for a while
a warmth fill your chest and you forget
the familiar return of blind imp tent rage.
an unwholesome thought appears; FEman SHEmale MANster;
an unwholesome thought appears;
and;
twin prongs single cavity; D'you ever notice how everything
that tastes good is bad for you?; Jus(tine/ice) ;
MY RULES MONEY THE WORLD BY THE
120 days of Marion, Illinois; D.A.F. \$assy;
twin prongs triple socket; rotated left 39 cm, shuddered,
moaned, cri, stimu readministered, exhibited a pain
response, spun torso 19 degrees, lost voluntary control of
bowels, stim readministered, seizure initialized; purple
foam found in surgical tubing; found a retard who's scrape
th ch of the yellow mayonnaise that's left behind;
now; put yourself back together remember you can't ; as can
now; eat at your job station; a sea green hospital stands
above

Peter Willard, impressions via Sleep Chamber videos, 1989

H23: Can you explain the term *Sleep Chamber* for those of us that don't know the story?
J Z: A SLEEP CHAMBER iz an air-tight container that waz first made in 1955 by a British professor named Andrew Clive. It waz made to freeze human material (the body) for future reference. He wanted the living to kno what the past had done, and he wanted the coming generations to kno first hand, not Historically, the truth about the past. Andrew Clive waz an extreme fellow. He waz really upset with government and social rules. He said all man's rules were based on GREED. The SLEEP CHAMBER evolved through 1959, but Clive waz murdered that year, and the secrets to his invention were stolen--typical ov anything ov interest to the government. Not only were the plans and memo's stolen, but so were three complete 455-pound SLEEP CHAMBER bed-tanks. To date no word haz ever surfaced about the CHAMBERS or their plans.

H23: Do you have any professional or academic background in the arts, or are you what they call a "folk artist"?
J Z: I have no musical background, training or experience in "the arts". SLEEP CHAMBER iz an honest emotion--it's daring, mystickal, and a challenge. Most ov all it's an obsession. I like to think ov it az an invitation to reality and emotion, and at the same time, an invite to defy dreams, fantasies, and surreal living. I am an extremist, if you couldn't tell.

H23: Sleep Chamber's line-up is constantly changing, and as such your sound constantly evolves. Obviously your goal is not to establish a certain musical identity. Perhaps the evolution is the identity. Any comment?
J Z: That's close. To keep changing iz to progress. The line-up that changes in SLEEP CHAMBER iz in the same way progressing az it changes. Why stay the same? Even if it iz successful, once you establish your style you are labeled and expectations ov "what you should sound like" are made. I guess you would be right in saying the evolution iz the identity, but not the full intention ov my goals.

H23: Obviously, sexuality plays a significant role in your work. Explain the use of the submission/domination relation in your music and videos. Is it porn?

J Z: Well, submission/domination in relation to eachother are opposites. And so are the conscious and subconscious. When both are united az an attempt to sample and process, you can better understand the factors of LOVE/HATE, PAIN/PLEASURE, and all other things that exist. All things have opposites. Why should we always choose one? Why not both? Most people have been forced into things their whole life--they have

always been made to choose one from another. It's easier that way--you don't have to think about it az much. So you have the reason why people choose one over the other.

It's what they've been taught their whole life.
It causes a conflict when a decision has to be made.

And most people prefer to be lazy.

In my opinion, SLEEP CHAMBER only offers eroticism, not pornography. Pornography iz actually poor eroticism. Before there waz porn, there waz erotica! The eroticism I offer in SLEEP CHAMBER haz to do with the content ov the musick. Pornography iz a cheap and tasteless version ov what iz in our hearts. When greed iz involved with anything, the final product iz exploited. Eroticism exploited = pornography.

When I offer flesh az an image, it iz to evoke the same emotion I feel az I compose the musick. Altho many people's emotions may be different than my own, I feel that I have truly represented the emotion tastefully.

To some people ANYTHING SEXUAL evokes FEAR, SIN, and VIOLENCE. My mind couldn't be any further from those thoughts when I speak ov sexuality.

Sexuality, our natural instinct. It waz the Devil in the story ov Adam and Eve who told them they were naked and their bodies were dirty, remember? It iz the wicked now who distort sexuality--they are the cause of uncertainty and confusion for those who are unclear about emotion in their own sexuality.

Destroy those who intentionally confuse YOU!!

H23: You always seem to emphasize dark and dangerous emotional situations, and you once said, "The dream I am chasing seems to be the key to who I am." Are we all secretly involved in this "sex-magick ritual"?

J Z: We are all involved with ritual in our lives. Every day. Tradition iz ritualism. Christmas iz a ritual. Easter iz a ritual, all holidays are rituals.

Having a cup ov coffee or tea every day before work iz a ritual. But az far az all ov us secretly being "sex magickal" about it... I don't think so. Sexmagick iz more ov a method ov establishing reality for me.

H23: Tell us about your particular sound techniques and why you use them.

J Z: When I record in the studio, there iz always an element ov suspense about how the final mix will sound. I like to mix in az much reality or emotion az I can, either through the effect involved, or in the rekording itself. SOUND SUGGESTION iz something Paul Arnold and I were experimenting with. It involves the subconscious in a way very different from how it normally responds to musick. When you are working with the subconscious it's hard to study the results, because they are always so varied. Each person may experience something unique. SOUND SUGGESTION might be easier explained az a physical "subliminal suggestion" to the subconscious. See, we know that subliminal-messaging iz effective, but we wanted to go beyond that--to get the subconscious to actually be activated on its own, by a certain signal or sound.

The subconscious iz very tricky, in both getting in and getting out. You have to give something different

for it to respond. In that way, I try to use different levels ov equilization when we mix and when we record the sound.

It all really happens to the listener tho.

Where their mind iz at the time they are listening.

H23: Can you describe what happens at a Sleep Chamber performance? What are the standard elements? What is it that seems to "scare" audiences away from your work?

J.Z.: At a SLEEP CHAMBER show? Well, I actually never know what iz going to happen. It depends on the audience really. Each audience we have had recently has been quite different from each other. Each show we do iz different also. The only thing that stays the same iz the intention. The elements, we are constantly changing and experimenting with new live elements. They never (audience) react the same, so each show ends up completely different. Some are really interesting, because even if we aren't at our best, we still maintain the energy from the audience. And they sustain it in return. Of course there have been shows where stupid people, who did not understand the process, got violent. We found they, in just about every case, were not there to see us. They had wandered in, or had no idea what kind ov atmosphere was being evoked. They never even knew what the name ov the band waz they were there to see.

The only reason for someone being "scared" iz if they do not understand. They reject the process and find it hard to accept the mood ov the show. And being in a crowded place when you are uncomfortable iz not a fun time.

H23: Explain the role of incense in your complete sensory experience.

J.Z.: Ahhhhhh... the incense... everyone always wants to know about the incense. Well, it always starts with a base ov WORMWOOD, MONKS HOOD, MANDRAKE and sometimes TREE DATURA. Theze all contain narcotic alkaloids.

When combined with other elements, lighting, sound, smell, etc., you affect all the senses.

By breathing, smelling, hearing, seeing, and if the EQ iz proper, by feeling. A sensory experience should challenge the psyche.

It should be something extremely different for the subconscious. THEN it iz an experience. One to be remembered.

H23: You have two new LP's with accompanying videos. So what about them? Any underlying messages we should know about?

J Z: Basically, I'm backing myself. Except for the *Satanic Sanction* LP which was backed by Luciano Dari, a pretty nice guy from Italy. He released the material on his *Musica Maxima Magnetica* label, which specializes in esoteric musics. I'm happy about the way the LP materialized. It was music that Jonathan Briley and I had worked on in '88, and I felt it was starting to age a bit when I was contacted by Luciano. So the project was actually realized before the priority musick (what we're currently working on) that I wanted to release instead of *Satanic Sanction*. I'm glad it was released first. The newest LP, "Sleep, Or Forever Hold Your Peace", has been in the works for over a year now. It's all the newest material we've been working on. As far as messages? Ummmmmm just listen closely.

H23: Have you established a chain of consistent venues to play?

J Z: No we haven't, but we ran into someone in Boston who was up visiting from Texas, Jasper Burns. He set up some shows in Houston, Dallas and Fort Worth (August and September). As far as welcoming us back, I'm sure if the place is packed they will. But we'll have to see how things go.

H23: What are you and your current line-up doing for upcoming live shows (I mean what elements are you incorporating into the performances)?

J Z: The current line-up is a bit different - a couple of new personnel, but I'm still working with Van Horn and Briley. Well, I try to keep the shows from being a three-ring circus by using only video and a few stage antics. I think it's easy for people to get caught up in tricks and gadgets instead of the energy and atmosphere we want to create. So many people expect so much. They have great expectations and ideas of how they want you to be. I really don't look at our live show as anything but a mood to experience our musick in. We don't have headless people with hoofs for feet or dwarfs, and we don't shit on stage or worship the devil. It's all really simple. It's just that our approach is so different that people take it negatively. Maybe it's just really effective?

H23: The word "intentions" has come up a few times in this interview. What are your intentions as a performer/musician? Do you see yourself as some kind of spokesman for a certain way of thinking?

J Z: My aim is to prove success to the few who take the alternative method of "life, love and reality" - away from greed and social goals. The hatred in my heart grows daily toward society, government, authority. My intentions are pure - it's the means of attaining my intentions that might be unacceptable to most. And if you have to fight dirty to win, that's the law of survival.

Sleep Chamber discography

for a listing of Sleep Chamber cassettes, see the Inner-X discography in retrospective.

Speak in Tongues (XXX-03), 7" EP, 1982

Sleep Chamber (XXX LP 3), 300 made, 1984

Warm Leatherette/Fetish (XXX SEX 3), 7" 45, 2000 made, 1986

Submit to Desire (XXX LP 5), 1985

Babylon (XXX EP 1), 12" EP, issued in two different covers, 1986

Spellbondage (XXX LP 9), 1987

Sexmagick Ritual (TR 0028), 1987

Sacred and Surreal (TR 0029), 1987

Satanic Sanction (EE 002), 1987

Sins ov Obsession (Funfunvierzig 31), 1988

Sharp Spikes & Spurs (XXX LP 10), 1989

Sleep, or Forever Hold Your Piece! (XXX LP 11), 1989
bootleg LP's...

Cock and Roll, live at Ocean State Theatre, 1986

Live at the Channel, 1986

Live at Palace Roads Theatre, 1986

Sleep Chamber live performances through 8/89**1983**

Red Loft, 7/30 >>> WMFO-FM broadcast, 9/9 >>> Dunn's, 9/10 >>> Mass. College of Art, 10/26 >>> Newberryport Screening Room, 11/13,14 >> Opium Coffee House, 12/31

1984

Mass. College of Art, 2/12 >>> WMFO-FM broadcast, 3/14 >>> Boston Food CoOp, 7/21 >>> Marshfield Ranch House, 8/26 >>> Instant Access TV broadcast, 9/22 >>> Paradise Theatre, 9/26 >>> Chets Last Call, 10/3 >>> Johnny D's, 10/25 >>> Avant Fair, 11/7 >>> The Rat Club, 11/11 >>> WZBC-FM broadcast, 11/15 >>> Longwood Theatre, 11/23 >>> Milton Cable TV broadcast, 11/28 >>> The Innersleeve Gallery, 12/1 >>> Jacks, 12/11 >>> Arlington Cable TV broadcast, 12/16 >>> The Rat Club, 12/23

1985

The Innersleeve Gallery, 1/27 >>> WMFO-FM broadcast, 1/30 >>> WJUL-FM broadcast, 2/22 >>> Johnny D's, 3/9 >>> The Rat Club, 3/24 >>> The Club, 3/29 >>> WZBC-FM broadcast, 4/27 >>> The All station, 5/8 >>> The Rat Club, 5/16 >>> The Den, 6/26 >>> WBRS-FM broadcast 7/13 >>> Jumpin' Jack Flash, 7/18 >>> The Rat Club, 8/18 >>> Ocean State Theatre, 9/7 >>> Sampson Theatre, 9/18 >>> The Channel, 9/19 >>> Canton TV broadcast, 10/10 >>> WERS-FM broadcast, 11/17 >>> The Rat Club, 12/18 >>> Arlington Hall, 12/23 >>> The Performance Center, 12/29

1986

Palace Roads Theatre, 4/19 >>> The Rat Club, 5/7 >>> Haden Smith Art College, 8/14 >>> The Rat Club, 9/23 >>> WZBC-FM broadcast, 11/6 >>> WMFO-FM broadcast, 11/13 >>> WAEO-FM broadcast, 12/18

1987

WZBC-FM broadcast, 3/23 >>> T. T. The Bears, 7/8 >>> Green Street Station, 7/9 (cancelled)

1988

Cultural Outreach TV Show, 3/5 >>> The Lizard Lounge, 10/1 >>> The Lizard Lounge, 12/31

1989

Ground Zero, 2/8 >>> Worcester Performance Center, 3/3 >>> The Cage, 4/6 >>> The Lizard Lounge, 5/13 >>> Ground Zero, 6/28

Sleep Chamber videos

Live on Instant Access TV, TV broadcast, 1984

Live at the Rat Club, live show/interview/videos, 1985

Submit to Desire, 1985

Trance, strobes/lights/dream machine, 1985

Video Collection, early and unreleased video, 1986

Sexmagick Ritual, film and video scraps, 1986

Pandorah's Box, collection of film and live, 1987

Spellbondage, interviews, street scenes, etc., 1987

Satanic Sanction, film for individual screening, 1988

Sleep Sanatorium, sensory overload video, 1988

Sirkle Zero, magick and the full moons, 1988

Sharp Spikes & Spurs, live at Ground Zero, 2/8/89, 1989

Masculine Dreams, live at Worcester Performance Center, 3/3/89, 1989

Sleep, or Forever Hold Your Piece!, 1989

23 Easy Pieces, 23 film/video pieces, 1989

Randy Greif

What is "Surrealist" music?

I think most people know what is meant by surrealism in the visual and literary media. Images or ideas are set in odd juxtapositions in an attempt to create more than the sum of the parts, revealing other meanings. All things have more than one meaning. Cubism explores multiple ways of seeing an object in a very physical sense, whereas surrealism examines the psychological or spiritual. The gestalt is left uncompleted, left for the receiver to fill in the gaps. The human mind is constantly searching for rational explanations, and by searching for relationships between seemingly incongruous elements, is forced to dig into the unconscious and dredge up the muck of personal experience, or perhaps pull up a fossil from the collective unconscious. Of course, these leaps are ancient history, but in the context of sound they are only now being explored. Audio surrealism adds the dimensions of rhythm, harmony and melody, and also noise, speech and aural dynamics.

How can the more traditional elements--rhythm, harmony and melody--be utilized in surrealist music?

All elements of music are manipulative--they are emotional, and sometimes physical, prods for reaction. Rhythm is physical and can affect heart rate, alpha waves and other biological functions. It is the core of trance musics in which altered states are desired. Harmony can relax or agitate, depending on its consonance or dissonance. Melody is the great seducer, clueing us in on how to feel in an almost narrative sense. By combining these elements incongruously, we open the doors to ambivalence.

Ωηματισμός ή Συρρεαλισμός μουσικής;

Ιημνικού μοστ πεοπλέ κνωμών αποτελείται από μεαντρά βψη συρρεαλισμού στην της θεατρικής ανδρών λιτεραρίας μεδια. Ιμαγιές ορθών ιδεών αρχείων στην οδό φυξιταποστούντος στην αντεπίστροφη χρεατική μορφή την της συμφωνίας παρτού, ρεπερεάλινης από την πλευρά μεαντρών. Άλλη την ίδια ημέρα μορφή την της συμφωνίας μεαντρών. Χυβισμός εξπλορεών μυλτιπλέων ωκεανών από σεεινήν αν οβφεχτάντων από την πλευρά της πηγαίνοντος συρρεαλισμού εξαμινώντας την πονηρηλογική της συμφωνίαν. Τη γεστατική της λεστής

υνχομπλετεδών, λεστής φοράς της ρεχειώδης το φίλλον της γατού. Την ημέραν μινδιού χοντανάτων σεαρχηγητήν φορά πανονταλά.

Εξπλοραγμούντος, ανδρών βψη σεαρχηγητήν φορά πρελαπιστητή παραβολήν σεεμινγλψήν υποχονγρυρούσαν ελεμεντός, ορθόφορχεδόν το διγύντο της υνχονοσχιούσαν ανδρών δρεγώντας την μυσχή από περσοναλές εξπεριενχές, ορθόπερηπατός πυλών υπάρχοντας δρομού της χολλεχηπώς υνχονοσχιούσαν. Ορθόχυρος, πησεσεις ιεαστής αρχείων ηιστοριών, βυθός της χοντεξτής από σουνδάτης αρχείων από ονλψη νομών βεινήν εξπλορεδών. Αυδιοσυρρεαλισμός αδόστηντης διμεντιούσαν από ρηψητήμα, ηαρμονών ανδρών μελοδιών, ανδρών αλσού νοισε, σπεεχήν ανδρών αυραλάδηναμιχσ.

"Several echoes answer one another on land: the echo of rains like a cork on a line, the echo of the sun like solder mixed with sand. The present echo is that of tears, and of the beauty appropriate to unreadable adventures, to mutilated dreams. We were arriving at the destination. The phantom who took a notion along the way to assume the body of Saint Denis claimed he saw his severed head in each rose. A stammering glued to the windowpanes and the railing, a cold stammering, mingled with our unrestrained kisses."

Andre' Breton, excerpt from *Soluble Fish*, 1924



interview

So ambivalence is desired?

Absolutely. Ambivalence over dogma. You can't believe anyone, like I said, all things have multiple meanings. The more we learn, the more mysterious life gets. How can we accept anything as absolute? Ambivalence is the weighing and reweighing of conflicting ideas and emotions, rather than focusing on an idea. Audio surrealism or surrealist music deals more with the subconscious mind, which does not operate on a rational level. In rationalizing, we are scratching the sore of what we do not know, easing the itch of nocturnal terror and finally facing the smiling assassin of childhood--

The Navigator.

A problem I've had with surrealism is that it's too easy to throw strange things together and pass it off as revelation.

Nothing is "passed off"; nothing is stated. Implications are constructed. Where one person finds meaning, another may find only sawdust and chopped ice. Any form of expression has its successes and failures. An expression will communicate if one has absolute faith that something is being touched upon, even if words fall short of explanation.

Lights out.

I tend to think if one person feels an impact, others will also. The danger arises when elements are put together simply out of convenience. Like the cook who says "I'm out of ground ginger--I'll just use salt instead." The train of thought becomes a train of cattle, and cattle made of candy helps us forget the workshop of horror. The cooking, the cards, our rustic instincts will exhaust the dog doubts. We dream every night, and occasionally a dream has a greater effect on us. It's no more strange or more obvious than any other, but we know it is significant. The best surrealist music brings us to that dream-like

state of acceptance where we share what we don't know.

How do you arrive at this sort of stream of consciousness and still remain working with technical equipment in the studio?

This is a difficult problem. I work late at night, primarily from midnight to 3:00 AM. When I'm tired, my thoughts wander more easily and become disjointed. That's when I'm at my best for working, yet it's harder to operate equipment, and I end up losing a lot of material. I don't decide to go into the studio at that time; it's just those hours that I feel most nostalgic. Looking back on the last thirteen hours of producing electronic and concrete music, I realize that I've always chosen those years, even in bedrooms where studio time was divided out in two year blocks. I chose the last time slot of the day and was able to stay where I was placed...to early morning. I have to go into the studio and listen to what I did the night before to remember what was laid down on tape. It often sounds different than how I remember it. Some of it is just garbage, but some will be as clean as a battleship.

How long do you work on a piece of music before it is done?

I work at a pretty frantic pace, sometimes to the point of sweating and tripping over things. I rarely spend more than two trips into the studio on one piece. Usually, the longer I work on something the worse it sounds. The thinking process gets in the way. And once I thought of my eardrums bursting and boiling matter running out of my nose...and that got in the way.

You mentioned other elements incorporated into surrealist music such as noise and speech. How do you use them?

Certainly noise and speech, natural or manipulated, are nothing new to music, but perhaps surrealism uses them in a different way. From the Futurists to Varese to Cage to Industrial Music, noise has been used. The sound of groups such as Throbbing

Gristle had its place and was exciting at the time, but now, ten years later, much has become cliche. Noise is no longer used one dimensionally as harsh, grating sound, that of the sad sewing machine, but of subtle, quiet sounds--the sound of the sea coming back. With these, along with unmanipulated effects, one can achieve greater discomfort with more versatility. Noise in surrealist music has an implied narrative quality. Not to say that each work is a story, but certain narrative connections are made.

I've been using speech and parts of speech that imply rather than state. Usually they are short phrases or words that people interpret and associate in different ways. Speech is the easy route, the most obvious. I'd like to move away from that toward sound effects alone. I do find it interesting though that an emotionally neutral phrase, when repeated enough or set against a particular background of sound, can take on its other meanings. Not puns or innuendos, but meanings that move like tentacles into our psyches.

When you talk about music as manipulation, aren't you contradicting yourself about moving away from dogma or absolute statement?

Yes, but manipulation is normally used for control, to benefit the manipulator in some way. From subliminal advertising to political propaganda, manipulation is used for profit. It is a tool, and a tool is neither good nor bad. How it is used determines its merit, and its merit is determined by each individual. Sleeping potion in our hands, we get excited...that is love. Love is not manipulation. It pulls a person behind the eyes and ears of the artist. The surrealist aesthetic does the same, but stops short of the final blow, leaving you floundering around on some beach. You're not told where to go from the midway point. Each person receives the same information, and leaves with a different understanding, or perhaps no understanding at all. In any case, what was spent that was so important?

PGR

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PGR INTERVIEW 1989 By Draeger Gunn

I first met Kim when he played the Anti-Club in 1985. It was a strange night. His collage music project PGR opened for a British

power pop act called the Lucy Show. Most of the people who showed up early didn't hang out to listen to PGR and ended up smoking dope or waiting in line for a beer during the performance. I had heard the first LP "Silence" on KXLU very late one night. I fell asleep with the radio on and awoke to the sound of rain and the smell of a damp Los Angeles at 3AM. The radio was on low and at first I thought it was noise from an apartment across the alley until I realized it was emanating from my radio. The experience I had while listening to the PGR piece was something I'll never forget. Perhaps it was just a cross of sensations, or I just experienced one of those rare moments when one awakes to find themselves in a highly sensitized, magical state. I knew I had to meet these people and see if they would be anything like their music. I stood amidst a dozen other people at the Anti-Club watching PGR's performance... it was a piece called "Kingdoms of the Sun" and had a video piece along with it. It was very poetic , but their struggling with technology gave the piece a strained feeling. After the performance I approached Kim who was wrapping audio cables and muttering obsenities about the soundman. I bought him a beer and told him about my experience with the "Silence" piece on KXLU. He said he found my reaction very interesting. I didn't want to come off like some sort of cultist type who finds hidden meanings in collage music so I said I was a writer for a local fanzine and wanted to do an article on PGR. He scribbled a number on the back of a poster and said to call him the next day. I called and we arranged to meet for brunch. I wanted to look professional so I remembered to bring along a tape recorder, and had sketched out some notes...actually, three questions...I wasn't well prepared to say the least. What came of this meeting was enough material for an article (which with Kim's help wound up in the last issue of Unsound magazine) and the start of a new friendship. The following was put together from what started as casual phone conversations. When the topics turned philosophic as they often do talking with Kim, I would turn on the tape recorder. It is raining in LA again as I write this...so with cigarettes and coffee handy I embark upon the task of piecing this together.

interview

DG: What was that "Cyberpunk" article in Keyboard magazine all about?...I can't believe the author was trying to pass off industrial music as being cyberpunk..it seems like musical outcasts have a new role model this year...

KC: Exactly...it probably has to do with needing something to latch onto as far as a style goes, since industrial dance music has become quite a money maker....sort of: " You like the sound...now buy the look"...even back in the early eighties there was a fashion code in industrial music...this style helped to usher in the cyberpunk aesthetic...so it's not surprising to see it becoming more fashionable on a wider basis.

DG: Yeah, industrial music had a bad period there for a while...you said that that was a factor in your decision to shut down Silent Records...did you think that industrial music had run its course?

KC: It seemed to me that there was a period of time between when Cab Volt's popularity was waning and the Neitwerk/Wax Trax sound became big money...in that period I found it very tough to find college radio DJ's who would play industrial music. Two things were responsible...first the majors were sucking up the college market for talent and second the experimental music DJ's were either forced out or had graduated...but things are different now that we have Ministry and Frontline Assembly gracing our airwaves...it seems people are listening to experimental music again...have you noticed how New Music America has been doing pretty nicely the past two or three years?...maybe the trickle-down theory does work...people weren't ready for 'noise' a few years ago, but thanks to TV commercials noise has become a part of the average person's vocabulary...I'm not sure I like the reasons for this but the ad companies are recognizing the markets that listen to rap and house...

DG: I know at least a two people who hated industrial music a few years back who now buy Skinny Puppy records.

KC: It's funny how the 'industrial sound' has become listenable...I'm not sure whether it has been watered down for mass consumption or whether the public's ear has stretched a bit. I know people who can't listen to rap music...they don't think it's music...they see all rap as being sound effects mixed with some black guy talking about violent things over the top. But put this same person in front of a TV set and put on the new Nike commercial and they go "Wow"...I guess it is watered down noise...but people are hearing differently today.

DG: How does this relate to the fact that composers like Cage and Stockhausen have tried to stretch the public's ear for the past forty years without any success?

KC: In many ways they have been successful. The public's ear has been stretched, but it has taken a while for these composers to have an effect on the general public...these composers were operating in a time when they only had so much in the way of resources available to them...it was usually locked up in universities or state operated radio stations in Europe...it wasn't portable and had to be operated by an electronics engineer...my point is that it wasn't suitable to becoming a pop medium. It wasn't until Louis and Bebe Barrons soundtrack for "Forbidden Planet" that it even started to make an appearance in the mainstream. After that it wasn't until Walter Carlos did "Switched On Bach" that anybody thought of creating music with synthesizers. Cage was only carrying on what the futurists had begun. Everyday sounds weren't considered music until the sampler was created...then everything became music because you could play it on a keyboard.

DG: Speaking of samplers...you bought one last year ,what have you been doing with it?

KC: I've composed three pieces on my EPS for various LP releases. They are extraction studies. I have developed some techniques where I manipulate the sound in the digital domain so it becomes unrecognizable...it essentially becomes something else. My second and third studies will be released on Banned Productions next year...the LP will be called "One Eye from Night" by AMK/PGR. Right now I'm working on some ideas for an upcoming LP for a Japanese label where I use the sampler to capture nuances in an improvisation and then I trigger its modified version in real time along with the improv...this provides a sense of mimickery.

DG: Will this be a PGR or a Thessalonians LP?

KC: It will be a PGR LP because the Thessalonians are no longer active as a group. The characteristics of improvisation have always been

present in PGR music and this LP will reflect a combining of different techniques I've used in my music.

DG: Are you planning on releasing any of this material on Silent Records?

KC: Probably not as a solo project. I have been very busy getting some of these pieces ready for other labels. Silent has a full schedule for next year...my hope is that I can do everything I want to without having to put things off till 1991...I can't stand having to delay projects because the material ceases to represent the artist after a while.

DG: What do you have planned for release on Silent next year?

KC: We have three or four LP's we want to release...we have a limited edition PGR 7" single on clear vinyl called "Euphoria, Order and Chaos", an LP by Keith Rowe (avant guitarist for AMM) and myself that we recorded in London in 1988, a collaborative LP by Arcane Device and PGR, and possibly another LP by Organum.

DG: What bugs you the most about the American underground?

KC: Their tendancy to be anti-intellectual.

DG: Why do you feel this is?

KC: Because this country prides itself on nuturing attentions spans that fit within the formats of network TV.

DG: There seems to be a connection here with the people you said had their ears stretched by TV commercials.

KC: Yes, but we are talking about a sensory stretching as opposed to a mental stretching...have you noticed how alot of the American underground get their sounds from TV and radio? The Europeans tend to draw on literary sources more than we do.

DG: Does this mean you tend favor the European sensibilities?

KC: By all means. I feel that they have alot more of a vocabulary to draw on.

DG: This is the end of the interview question...where you're supposed to give us an encapsulated wrap up of your entire philosophy...

KC: God...let's see...OK, I've got it...Eat well, get plenty of exercise and send us a SASE for your very own Silent Records catalog.

"Silence" PGR's first independent vinyl release in 1985. More collage work and an ambient piece with metal percussion and flutes. Out of print.

"Mirage De America" a 10 minute piece on "God Bless America", a three record compilation released by RRR in 1985. This piece is a prototype of the later experiments using the process of "accidental Imbrication".

"The Flickering of Sowing Time" PGR's second LP released on RRR in 1986. Further explorations into sound track music and a piece using the process of "extraction". Banned by Rough Trade because of the sexist front cover. Out of print.

"Angel of Chaos/Demon of Order" a track of early work (pre-PGR) by Kim Cascone of improvised electro-acoustic music. Released on cassette with Unsound Magazines final issue. Released December of 1987.

"Gordon Matta Clark" an electronic music piece for the X-Kurzhen cassette compilation: "The Real Poison".

"Flatland" a cassette release on Banned Productions. This tape is a collaborative effort between PGR, AMK, and Andrew Moore. The pieces range from celtic to gamelan atmospheres. Released in January of 1988.

"Born Tying Knots" a track for an upcoming compilation on Subterranean Records. This piece was composed entirely on sampler using heavily modified samples. Release date unknown.

"Grav" A collaborative LP between Merzbow, Asmus Tietchens, and PGR for Freedom In A Vacuum Records. Release scheduled for summer of 1990.

"One Eye From Night" a collaborative LP by AMK and PGR for Banned Productions. Release date unknown of this writing.

"The Black Field" LP release of improvisational pieces with Thessalonians on Silent Records. Released in October of 1989.

"Euphoria, Order and Chaos" a limited edition 7" on clear vinyl (only 500 pressed). To be released on Silent Records spring of 1990.

"A Hole of Unknown Depth" an LP of four neo-minimalist compositions by PGR for the Noctovision label in Japan. Due to be released spring of 1990.

addition: the Kim Cascone/PGR track on the enclosed H23/RRR EP is a previously unreleased pre-PGR piece composed by Kim in 1983.

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The Amazing H23/RRR EP

A

Sleep Chamber

"No Air, No Way (Dreams on the Respirator)"

copr. 1990, Inner-X*

Kim Cascone/PGR

"The Spring of Ruined Days"

copr. 1990, Silent Records*

B

Floating Concrete Octopus

"A Cliff Dweller's Escape"

copr. 1990, F.C.O.*

Randy Greif

"I'm a Bat"

copr. 1990, Swinging Axe Productions*

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The Problem then is the difficulty encountered in the critical community--of which you are a member and myself a former member--to distinguish between means and ends, tradition and nuance, statement and intent.

People assume that jazz, in order to remain jazz, must remain Black and therefore non-intellectual. Too bad for Braxton. Too bad for Coltrane. Too bad for the white musicians who will never be critically appreciated or recognized by a wider audience because they simply don't fit the mold; people like Steve Lacey, Barry Altschul, Jack Wright, Derek Bailey and Borbetomagus' Jim Sauter and Don Dietrich, all of whose mastery in the theory and performance of "post-modern" jazz is reflected both in what they have to say and what they have to play.

NOMUSIC? You don't know my motives in making this music any more than you know my tastes in music or my haphazard recording conditions. You're trying to fit the music into a mold you know because it sounds a particular way to you, and so there's no need to give it any more of your time. What I have been saying in articles is that I prefer to examine and work within the real world in which economic survival and the commodification of the music are just the way things are, and you have interpreted this to mean that I'm readjusting my social parameters to look for acceptance in the marketplace, or on MTV. Be assured that My disdain for the cycle of artist exploitation and mass-pandering is deep enough, and my disgust for the arrogance of the average Amerikkkan is strong enough, so that I am willing to weigh the merits of *widening slightly* my music's visibility without resorting to pandering and ass-kissing. Deep in my black heart, I remain a neurotic snob with one too many chips on my shoulder to seek my friends anywhere I can buy them.

And what's your problem with Mozart, anyway? Was he a glam-rocker?

Luv.....

(Ron, September, 1989)

I deny any elitist attitude on my part. Why is it so hard for you to see that what I am proposing is a "spotlight", not an elitism. Nothing is evil. Everything is good. Including those who choose to work within a real world situation, such as, yourself. I never accused you of producing "dance fodder for the proles." Thought provoking, interesting music certainly can have a beat, and within that context, your own work is very respectable. My compliments.

I have read Artitude. It was an excellent magazine. Why did you stop? Artitude was about musical and non-musical ideas rather than styles (rock, industrial, jazz, whatever). Good play on your part! As such, it was of no consequence that all disciplines were featured. OBVIOUSLY, H23 is also about ideas. But more importantly, H23 is about results and ends, not only means and ideas. Perhaps what I am proposing is a separation between commercial and non-commercial, cultural and counter-cultural aesthetics. The idea is to spotlight artists who, REGARDLESS of their musical, literary, or artistic backgrounds (or lack of background), transcend all genres in by-passing their "musical" roots, which are the roots of commerciality and accessibility. To site some of your own examples, Braxton and Borbetomagus alike would receive the critical acclaim they deserved if more people adopted this attitude.

The musicians, composers, etc. who explore truly new territory are never appreciated until their structures are filtered, twisted,

mutilated and otherwise disguised under layers of music that people already feel comfortable with. I'd like to change that. Why do people ignore inventive expression in its pure, virgin state? For instance, musicians in many accepted styles claim the influence of John Cage, but what of Cage in the raw? Few people actually listen to him.

This is not an elitist approach, because I'm not claiming that any other critical viewpoint is inferior. Your approach is culturally important, but vastly different. All musicians enter the studio with ideas buzzing in their heads. Most musicians then choose an underlying structure from their store of knowledge (rock, for instance) and express their ideas in that context. This is how a genre progresses (hence, "progressive electronic music"). Other musicians (those of interest to H23) enter the studio intent on examining the musical structures themselves. They experiment with new combinations of existing foundations, or they ignore them completely in search of a sound that more closely symbolizes the abstractions firing in their brains (hence, "experimental music").

Am I a bigot for making such a distinction? I don't think so. And H23 has been met with enough enthusiasm for me to believe that others are interested in making that distinction.

That's all for now,
Ron.

p.s. Carl, of course Mozart was not a glam-rocker. His compositions are crucial listening. But he's dead, and his structural ideas have been worked and reworked enough. A genius of Mozart's rank will come again soon, I'm sure of it. And he won't be peddling an interpretation of other people's wares. Will anyone notice him, or will he be dismissed as too weird for public consumption? I'm keeping my eyes open. Perhaps I'll even get an interview.....

Inner-X started in 1982 when John Zewizz decided the "alternative" music market was not quite alternative enough. After knocking on doors of local labels and press, the truth was becoming obvious. No one was interested—at least not in what Mr. Zewizz had to offer. JZ started with a few 7"s and a few cassettes. Mail-order was really the only place to market such obscure taste in music. In time John opened the INNERSLEEVE shop to retail/wholesale what was becoming an all new market—INNER-X Musick. The shop was visited by people worldwide, from Genesis P-Orridge to Paul Lemos. It was becoming something.

Events and shows were the next step. Hunting Lodge, Psychic TV, Blax, Psy Field, Coup De Grace, Hideous in Strength, Women of the SS, Daze of Trance, Massman, Carl Weingarten, Primitive Romance, Holy Cow, Dokument, Bart Delerious, Cargo of Despair, Seven from Life, Johnathan Briley, and of course Sleep Chamber. These were only some of the shows organized by Zewizz. Shows were put on every weekend at the small music shop.

Inner-X was more than cassettes and vinyl.

It was a movement, with a history of live performances, recordings, video releases, interviews, and people meeting like-minded people. But all good things must come to an end; you need death to be born into change. Zewizz found himself spending more time developing Sleep Chamber, and the music on Inner-X generally outgrew themselves.

Today JZ has a few releases licensed under Inner-X, but the good ole' days are gone. If you own early Inner-X releases hold on to them. There are a lot of collectors interested in these now rare recordings. Anything still available can probably be obtained through RRRecords.

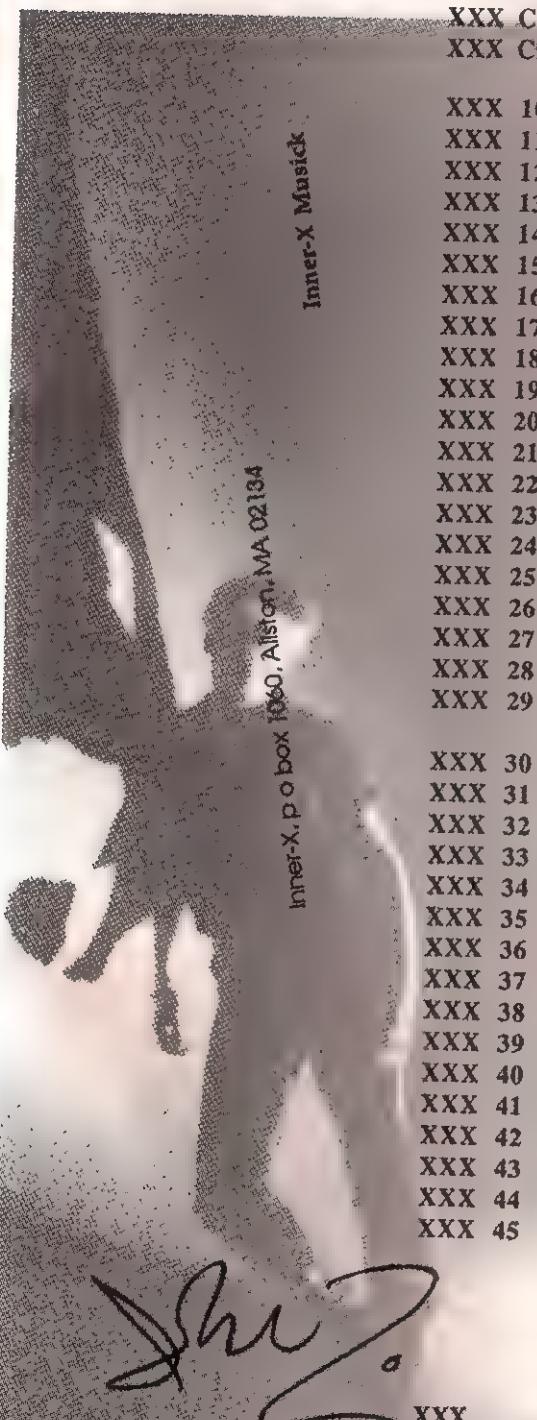
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|-----------|---|
| XXX 01 | The Product "Angles/Midway" 7" 45, 1000 copies, 1980 |
| XXX 02 | Sleep Chamber "Breath for Brian" c-20, 200 made, 1982 |
| XXX 03 | Sleep Chamber "Speak in Tongues" 7" EP, 1000 made, 1982 |
| XXX 04 | Sleep Chamber "Speak in Tongues" c-20, 1982 |
| XXX 05 | Sleep Chamber "Dream Distillate" c-45, 1983 |
| XXX 06 | A Taste of the Bizarre (compilation) c-60, 1983 |
| XXX 07 | Hidious in Strength "Sndk to Forever" c-45, 1983 |
| XXX 08 | Hidious in Strength "Line of Souls" c-45, 1983 |
| XXX 09 | Sleep Chamber "Phonesexual" c-50, only a few copies--FCC problems at a local radio station caused this tape to be stopped and left unreleased, 1983 |
| XXX 010 | Noizeclot "Saind for Torture, Bondage, Leather Sex" c-60, 1984 |
| XXX 011 | Taste of Tongues (compilation) c-60, 1984 |
| XXX 012 | Daze of Trance "Adventure Pak" c-60, 1984 |
| XXX 013 | 7-From Life "Souls of Dead Sharks" c-60, 1984 |
| XXX 014 | Sleep Chamber "W:O:M" c-60, 1985 |
| XXX 015 | Ways of the Sacred (compilation) c-60, 1985 |
| XXX 016 | Hunting Lodge "The Harvest" c-60, live, 1985 |
| XXX 017 | Controlled Bleeding "Shitslipper" c-60, 1985 |
| XXX 018 | The Last Daze (compilation) c-60, 1985 |
| XXX 019 | The Flagellants c-60, unreleased to date |
| XXX 020 | Erotika (compilation & booklet) c-60, 1000 made, 1985 |
| XXX 021 | 7-From Life "Coral Assault" c-60, 1985 |
| XXX 022 | Noizeclot "Suckpump" c-60, unreleased to date |
| XXX 023 | Sleep Chamber "In Dept Minor" c-60, unreleased to date |
| XXX LP 1 | The Oblique Collection (compilation) 100 made, 1983 |
| XXX LP 1 | The Oblique Collection (compilation) 3000 made, 1984 |
| XXX LP 2 | Drastic Perversions (compilation) 3000 made, 1984 |
| XXX LP 3 | Sleep Chamber limited edition, 300 made, 1984 |
| XXX LP 4 | Slaughter ov thee Innocent (compilation) 3000 made, 1985 |
| XXX LP 5 | Sleep Chamber "Submit to Desire" 1985 |
| XXX LP 6 | Jonathan Briley unreleased to date |
| XXX LP 7 | Seven From Life unreleased to date |
| XXX LP 8 | Women of the SS "Pride" unreleased to date |
| XXX LP 9 | Sleep Chamber "Spellbondage" 1987 |
| XXX EP 1 | Sleep Chamber "Babylon" 1986 |
| XXX EP 1 | Sleep Chamber "Babylon" 500 made with title on bottom of cover |
| XXX SEX 1 | Women of the SS EP, 1985 |
| XXX SEX 2 | Psychic TV (cassette & booklet) 1985 |
| XXX SEX 3 | Sleep Chamber "Warm Leatherette/Fetish" 45, 1985 |
| no # | Women of the SS "Private Edition" EP, booklet, and c-60, 100 made, 1985 |

Inner-X was a Boston Happening.

XXX C1 Sleep Chamber "Dream Distillate" C-50, reissue, 1983
XXX C2 Hidious in Strength "Industrial Suffocation" c-50, 1983
XXX C3 Hidious in Strength "Nun with a Gun" c-45, 1983
XXX C4 Sleep Chamber "Musick for Mannequins" c-60, 250 copies, box set, 1984
XXX C4 Sleep Chamber, reissue of above with booklet, 1984
XXX C5 Hidious in Strength "Az Recorded Live" c-45, 1984
XXX C6 Have a Merry XXX-mas, compilation, c-60, 1984
XXX C7 Sleep Chamber "Live at Newburyport" c-60, 1984
XXX C8 Dokument, c-60, 1984
XXX C9 Women of SS, c-60, 1984 note: C4 and C9 were released out of sink

XXX 10 XXX File-Dokument, c-60, interview/Sleep Chamber live, 1983
XXX 11 This iz the Way, compilation, c-60, 1983
XXX 12 Ze Wizz Kidz, c-60, 1983
XXX 13 unreleased to date
XXX 14 Daze of Trance, c-60, 1983
XXX 15 Hidious in Strength "Stranger Days" c-60, 1984
XXX 16 Charles Manson "Lies" 1984
XXX 17 Perfected Perversions, compilation, c-60, 1985
XXX 18 Controlled Bleeding, c-60, 1985
XXX 19 Hidious in Strength "Cold Dark Smell" c-60, 1985
XXX 20 Women of the SS "2nd tape" c-60, 1985
XXX 21 Bizarre Antics, c-60, 1985
XXX 22 Noizeclot "Beyond Agony" c-60, 1985
XXX 23 Sleep Chamber "Sigil 23" c-60, 1985
XXX 24 Bloodclot (Noizeclot and Controlled Bleeding), c-60, 1985
XXX 25 Women of the SS "Rigor Romance" c-60, live, 1985
XXX 26 Jonathan Briley "Darker Profits" c-60, 1985
XXX 27 7- From Life "Sting of the Honey Spider" c-60, 1985
XXX 28 Hidious in Strength "Eyes See to This" c-60, 1985
XXX 29 Sleep Chamber "Trance" c-60, later reissued as a c-90 containing most all the musick from the video, 1985
XXX 30 Musica Venenae, compilation and booklet, c-60, 1985
XXX 31 Noizeclot "Death Dokument" c-45, 1985
XXX 32 Mahkanik, c-60, 1986
XXX 33 Sleep Chamber "Icons and Ov" c-90, 1986
XXX 34 Jonathan Briley "Will to Power" c-60, 1986
XXX 35 Cult ov thee Womb, c-60, 1986
XXX 36 Cult ov thee Womb II, c-60, 1986
XXX 37 Sleep Chamber "Flesh on Flesh" c-60, 1986
XXX 38 Musica Venenae #2, unreleased to date
XXX 39 Jonathan Briley "At the Mountains of Madness" c-60, 1986
XXX 40 7- From Life "Tantra Vendetta" c-60, 1986
XXX 41 Hidious in Strength "Within Wires" c-60, 1986
XXX 42 John Zewizz "Passions ov Pan" c-60, 1987
XXX 43 Women of the SS "The Call to All Women" c-60, 1987
XXX 44 Noize, Nonsense and Nothing, compilation, c-60, 1987
XXX 45 Jonathan Briley "From Kain to Abel" c-60, 1987

In 1987, the XXX numbering series for cassettes was dropped. All cassettes released since then have been released with the XXX logo and copyright only...



XXX Sleep Chamber "Sexmagick Ritual" c-60, 1987
 XXX Sleep Chamber "Spellbondage" c-60, 1987
 XXX Briley/Zewizz, c-45, 1987
 XXX Sleep Chamber "Sleep Sequence" c-90, 1988
 XXX Sleep Chamber "Sleep Sanitorium" c-90, 1988
 XXX Sleep Chamber "Sharp Spikes & Spurs" c-90, 1989

Conrad Schnitzler

and a
history
of the
Cassette
Concert

by Gen Ken Montgomery

A fan of early free jazz, contrasted with listening to Herbert Elmert's Studio 55 in Cologne Conrad began working with non-keyboard analog synthesizers and amplified acoustic instruments in the late 60's, and is known as a pioneer of electro-acoustic music. With over 30 records released internationally, he is credited with starting the independent home composing and production movement. **As early as 1971**, Conrad self-produced his own record, in an edition of 100, all with hand-made covers. In addition, Conrad was extremely active as a performance artist using music. In searching for a larger, more complex sound for his performance, he began recording particular patches, patterns, or textures of sound on individual cassettes, to be used in tandem with live synthesizer playing. This led to the construction of the "Kassettenorgel" (cassette organ), which consisted of six stereo tape decks, all internally wired to a stereo output. Used in performances, Conrad would select cassettes from suitcases of carefully organized groupings of sounds to construct the sound and space he wanted. **Although Conrad wasn't the first artist** to use taped cassettes in live performances, his method was unique and certainly uncommon at this early point in time. His method of cassette playing allowed spontaneous interaction with the music, which was an increasingly important factor in his work. His command of recording and performing brought him to many important venues, including **Cafe Einstein** in Berlin, **The Kitchen** in New York, **Le Musee D'Art Moderne de la Ville** in Paris, and the **ARS Electronica** in Linz. In many of these performances, Conrad attached a belt of walkmans to his body, all wired to a megaphone attached to a helmet on his head. With this added flexibility he could perform at any location in the world, either walking through the space with sounds coming from his body, or in conjunction with the Kassettenorgel set up in the room. Conrad gave these first Cassette Concerts in a variety of settings, which lasted from one hour to any number of hours. There was one Cassette Concert given at the **Block Gallery** in Berlin that lasted for 50 hours.

This exploration of acoustic-spacial composition had a strong relation to Conrad's earlier ideas combining sculpture and music (He studied sculpture in Dusseldorf with **Joseph Beuys**). These ideas developed into Cassette Concerts composed with groupings of four cassettes, where each cassette was intended to be played from the four corners of a room. Although the use of four cassettes has become almost standard for Conrad's Cassette Concerts, there are many exceptions, including "**Conrad & Sequenza**", a concert for two cassettes released in an edition of 500 by **David Elliot's Y.U.R.** cassette label in England, "**Composition fur Sechs Kassten**", a concert for six cassettes released in an edition of 10 and sold at **Gelbe Music** in Berlin, and most recently "**The Thousander Program**", a Cassette Concert-in-progress for 1000 individually recorded cassettes. **By this time the Cassette Concert idea went well beyond** practicality as each new idea led to developments in composition and live performance. At the same time, technological advances gave artists the chance to work with digital synthesizers that featured programming and computer controlled interface possibilities.

For the realisation of live electronic music, there were definite and somewhat limited schools of thought. There were the academic composers, whose complex mathematical and computer assisted compositions could unfortunately often only be heard via the static replaying of a tape or pre-programmed data bank. There were the experimental composers, such as John Cage or La Monte Young whose compositions were based on clever and intriguing conceptual ideas (separated from the notation, however, the pieces often lacked a musical identity). Then there were the commercially oriented electronic pop groups and composers, who would program a skeleton and embellish it with more manageable instrumentation. These methods did not allow for much intuitive work or surprises. On the other hand, there was improvised music, which contained the spontaneity and intuition but often lacked a repeatable structure or musical identity. These limitations separated many into discrete categories.

But the Cassette Concert permitted Conrad to combine the best elements of structured and composed music, free forms, and conceptual work into a workable, personalized and identifiable method...

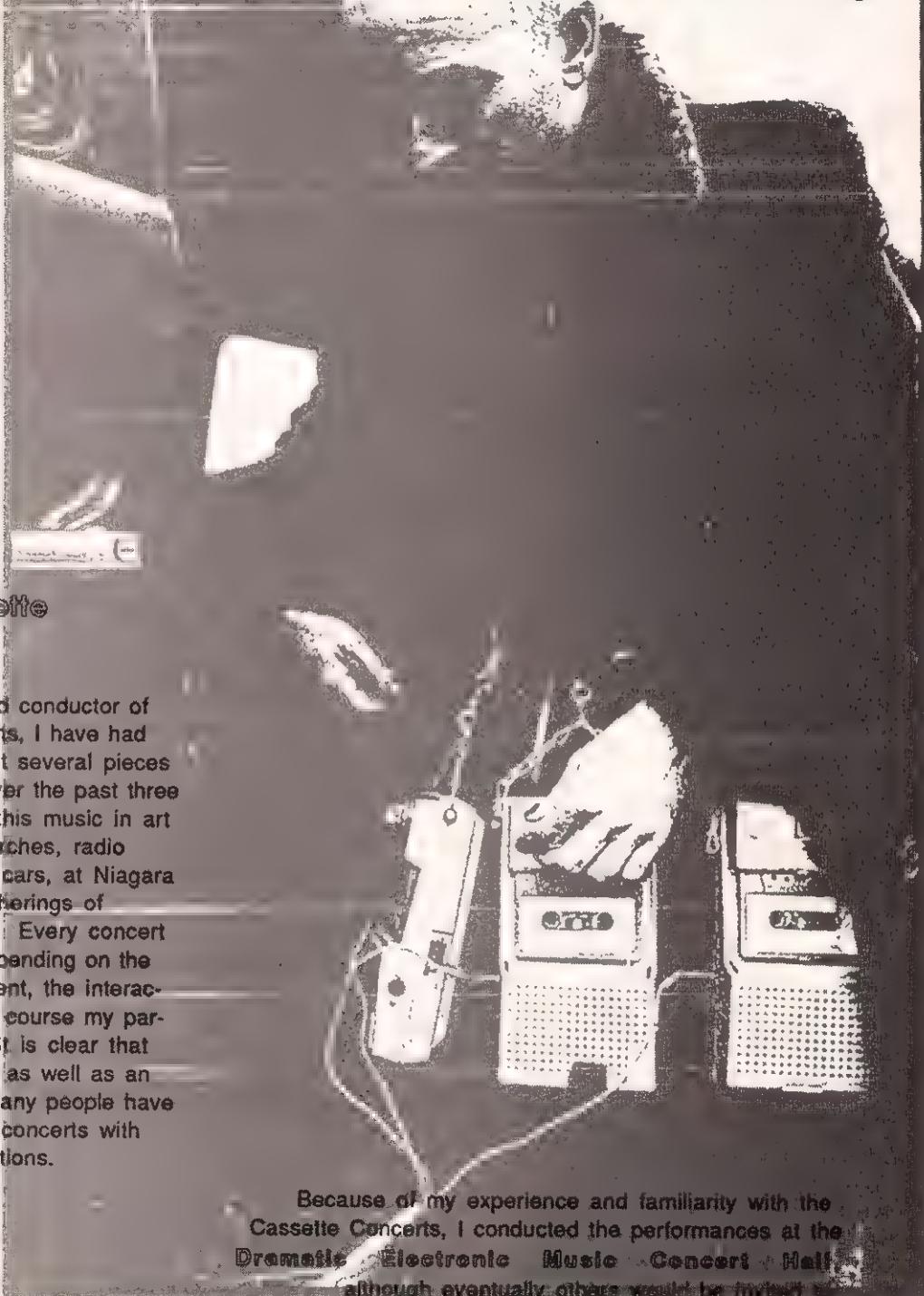
Live Electronic Music

At one time there was a question of the qualitative preference between taped electronics in a performance and "real time" work, but with the advance of sophisticated digital programming, the differences have become only a question of definition. Conrad's Cassette Concerts came of age by breathing new life into live electronic music. He began to establish a new alternative form of "notation" that could carry this music to future generations. Not only were there new possibilities for the performance and creation of the music, but each individual cassette could be thought of as a musical line of notation to a completed and compositionally structured whole. After all, the traditional form of notation was also a method devised by composers, utilizing the technology of the times, to leave information and instructions, which could be interpreted by conductors, arrangers and preservers of music for generations to come. The Cassette Concert provides the opportunity to preserve the inherent dynamics of the composition, as well as the chance to interject subjective interpretation, taste and creativity into the original form. Thus the music is very much alive,

apart from any static recording or documentation, which is the intent of the Cassette Concert.

Some of Conrad's works have been mixed and pressed as a record, cassette or CD, but unlike other electronic music recordings, the final recording is not final at all. It is merely a documentation of one particular mix, at one particular time and place. In the hands of Conrad or another conductor, the recording could, and would be, completely different. The differences come from the attenuation and mixing of volumes, the adjusting of equalization, additional and perhaps updated signal processing, as well as the placement of speakers (both in stationary and moving positions) for spatial diffusion of sound. There is also the possibility of changing the starting time of the individual cassettes, which alone can provide tremendous variation in the relationship of sounds. At times it is very difficult to start four cassette players at precisely the same moment; so these variations are deliberately inherent in the Cassette Concert method of composition. In fact, when you change the starting time intervals from 30 seconds to two minutes between cassettes, the variations increase dramatically and proportionately. There is also the opportunity for the conductor to add entirely new lines to the piece, either from another Cassette Concert, or something composed or improvised by the conductor. All interactions are invited, as the audience can become an important creative element in the music. Amazingly, despite their seemingly free style of construction, the Cassette Concerts have a very definite, cohesive and consistent musical identity (within an obvious range of sensitivity for the music).

Conrad found a way to effectively compose structured-free-flowing music, which, without understanding the Cassette Concert, would sound like a contradiction. His work transforms a static recording into an evolving interactive intermedial event, where creativity is passed through the medium to encourage and inspire the creativity of the audience. The aim is to eventually break down the self-imposed barrier between the so-called "active" state of the performer and the passive state of the listening public. All forms of creativity are expressed, shared and encouraged.



Who conducts Cassette Concerts?

As the first authorized conductor of Conrad's Cassette Concerts, I have had the opportunity to conduct several pieces in Europe and America over the past three years. I've experienced this music in art galleries, rock clubs, churches, radio stations, shopping malls, cars, at Niagara Falls, and at informal gatherings of friends around the world. Every concert was absolutely unique, depending on the space, the sound equipment, the interaction of the people, and of course my particular feeling that day. It is clear that there is life in this music, as well as an inherent call to create. Many people have approached me after the concerts with excited and inspired reactions.

Because of my experience and familiarity with the Cassette Concerts, I conducted the performances at the Dramatic Electronic Music Concert Hall, although eventually others would be invited to participate. Soon GENCON Productions will be releasing a Cassette Concert through Generations

Unlimited, which will encourage and promote the awareness of these works around the world. People will be invited to explore the possibilities of these concerts for themselves, because Art is no secret anymore.

Editor's want list:

Berio-Cummings-Busotti-Cage, *Time S/8003(stereo)*, Time 58003(mono), Mainstream MS/5005

Live Electronic Music Improvised, Mainstream MS/5002 (featured AMM and MEV)

Sonic Arts Union, Mainstream MS/5010 (featured Ashley, Lucifer, Mumma, Behrman)

Panorama de la musique concrete no.1, no.2

These are mid 50's recordings of very early French concrete music. Released on Ducretet-Thompson and London.

Z'ev—production and decay of spacial relations, Backstreet Records

Source: *Music of the Avant Garde* (magazine, 9 issues, 1967-71)

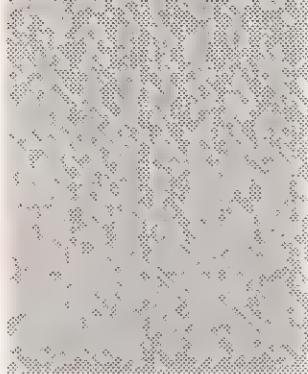
SPK- Live at the Crypt (cassette, Sterile Records)

Any information and/or recordings pertaining to the original Hafler Trio, 1954-75. I don't know what exists, if anything.

John Cage- Cartridge Music (1962, Mainstream MS-5015)

Reviews in this issue by Ron Rice, Joe Metcalfe and Peter Willard.

If you submitted material for review and do not find it listed here, my apologies. A tragic computer accident destroyed many completed reviews that were stored on a disc. Of course I will always keep backup copies in the future. Sorry for the inconvenience, but please keep sending material.

Printed Matter

Bananafish (magazine, c/o Seymour Glass, po box 11463, San Francisco, CA 94101-7463)

B-Fish covers music—Industrial and experimental to grungy underground rock, with sidetrips into sleazy letters-to-the-editor and the equally demented world of "normal" society. Like H23, this zine gives space to faces only seen in back pages elsewhere. However, B-Fish provides non-stop sarcastic humor at no extra charge. The review sections are a great read-about fifteen pages of continuous jabbering about this record, that tape, and days in the life of Seymour. This is a refreshing approach—my review section is static and medicinal in comparison. Issue #2 includes interviews with Lee Renaldo, The Thrown-Ups, John Hubbard, The Whitefronts, Steve Fisk and Greg Freeman. The Fred and Ethel Mertz issue covers Emil Beaulieu, Three Day Stubble, Negativland, Tragic Mulatto and Caroliner.

Issue #4, the Karen Carpenter issue, includes a 7" EP with Thinking Fellers Union Local 282, World of Pooh, Lucian Tielens, Cathy Kidd, Emile Beaulieu, Tim Smith, and Piglatin—the seven tracks range from a few seconds to a couple minutes, spoken word to almost Carpenter-like covers. The 'zine focuses on Karen and other matters of importance.

Chemical Castration—#s 5, 6 (magazine, ed. Ben Gilbert, 40 Chase St., Newton, MA 02159)

This small (14-page) 'zine can be had for a dollar in the states and IRC's else-

where. Each issue contains one in-depth interview with a noise/experimental outfit, plus a few pages of miscellaneous. Issue 5 (winter/spring 1989) interviews the Chicago-based power electronics group *Terre Blanche*. The discussion attempts to make sense of TB's extreme racial hatred that is the driving force of their work. Also included are reviews, cartoons, and an article by Keary Suska on the occult, hinduism, etc.. Issue 6 (winter/spring 1990) interviews *Intrinsic Action*, another power electronics band from Chicago. This is also includes reviews, a column by Jeph Jerman, and a response from PBK to the touchy *Terre Blanche* interview. Potent words often do come in small packages. Send your buck.

Convulsions-Vol 1, #4 (magazine, 5/143 Glenhuntly Rd., Elwood 3184, Australia)

This small yet significant aussie zine explores a range of international mail-art and visual poetry. This issue includes a few pieces from Italy, U.S.S.R., Scotland, U.S.A., etc., contact info, and a written piece about networking by Guy Bleus of Belgium. Editor *Cerebral Shorts* has informed me that his interests range from industrial culture to performance art, etc.. He has a few other booklets available, and he has apparently written several performance pieces of his own (I just might publish a few in H23). Included in my package was a six-page, minimal exploration in typesetting titled "Alphabet Blocks". If you write, ask about participating in his new "Brainstem" correspondance art project.

Electronic Cottage (magazine, po box 3637, Apollo Beach, FL 33570)

This is editor Hal 'Dog as Master' McGee's excellent attempt to fill a gap in the coverage of the indie cassette network. EC is not about music per se—it's about networking and home taping in general. So you'll find philosophical and inspirational articles, as well

as features of tapes in all styles. News, reviews and an abundance of advertising make for an excellent sourcebook. If you're in the market specifically for experimental, non-rock styles (like I am), you'll probably only filter out a third of the material covered here-- this is one of the better sources. Contributors in Issue #1 include Dave Prescott, Carl Howard, Melkal And, Amy Denio, Daniel Plunkett, Jeph Jerman, etc.. The cover story is an interview with Al "Sound of Pig" Margolis. Issue #2 contains an interview with Chris (Harsh Reality Tapes) Phinney. Also includes Allegory Chapel, Carl Howard, home music projects for kids, Pat Andrade and the cassette label Maya, Iao Core, reviews, etc..

The cover story for Issue #3 is an interview with Dave Prescott of Generations Unlimited. Plus the Kentucky Fried Royalty cassette makers conference, XKurzhen tapes, a history of Photostatic, Illusion of Safety, Randy Greif, and lots more. No reviews in this ish.

Experimental Musical Instruments (magazine, \$3.50/copy, po box 784, Nicasio, CA 94946)

In recent years, according to EMI, there has been a surge of creative instrument building. You'll find ample proof of that here—an incredible array of work from all over the world. You'll also find news about little known traditional instruments and articles on acoustics, tools and techniques. EMI, now in its fifth year, is the only publication I know of that devotes itself to such things. Here are a few highlights from recent issues:

April, 1989: Experienced potter Ward Hartenstein discusses the acoustic potentials of clay; everything you always wanted to know about 19-tone equal temperament tuning; new twists on stringed instruments.

June, 1989: All about mirlitons (kazoos and more advanced forms); Ernie Althoff's self-playing bamboo instruments (utilizing tape decks and turntables for

movement); Hans Reichel's very interesting pick-behind-the-bridge guitar (which uses the bridge as a selective harmonics filter).

August, 1989: History of the Piatarbajo, or one-man-band; first in a series of articles on Instruments played by whirling or spinning (bull-roarers, pallet drums, etc.); a history of digital sampling.

October, 1989: Sound sculpture by Doug Hollis, Peter Richards, and Bill Fontana; more whirling instruments--this time made of corrugated tubing; music for young children in the Montessori program. **December, 1989:** Music with balloons and bladders; the basics of vibrating string behavior, whirling instruments--spirit catchers and windwands. **February, 1990:** All about the many materials used to make musical strings; Nigerian influenced Udu drums; kids making instruments, etc..

The following is a short interview with Bart Hopkin, editor of EMI...

H23: Is there a typical experimental instrument designer/builder?

Bart: Most of the music one hears within a given cultural environment is produced on one or another of a fairly small group of standard instrument types. It is easy to go ahead and behave as if those types define the possibilities for musical sound making. But why should every musical instrument be made in the mold of some pre-existing type? I could make an instrument which is neither banjo or bassoon, but something different... Some people who have had that thought and acted on it are avant garde types, defiant of traditions, but others don't fit that description at all. There are plenty who have special backgrounds in acoustics, intonational theory, metal or woodworking, electronics, European musicology or ethnomusicology, musical pedagogy, etc.. There are also a lot of backyard tinkerers who have no special background but who just like to make music. **H23:** Is there any cultural or spiritual significance in the

recent surge of instrument building?

Bart: You know, I used to make much of this, until I became concerned that I was sounding like a crusader and overstating reality. I would rather emphasize continuity than glorify departure. An irrepressible urge to tinker has been part of human nature for a long time. Harry Partch does stand out as an utterly unique figure for a variety of reasons, but a completely impractical devotion to creative instrument design has been with us all along. I would prefer to see the significance of this activity as testimony to something shared by my parents, myself and my children. That shared something, to my thinking, can be found somewhere around the place where intention, endeavor, creativity, imagination, and our relation to the physical world meet. Too vague?

H23: Have there been any significant directions in instrument building in recent years?

Bart: The most identifiable trend is an increasingly strong interest in scale systems other than the 12-tone that has been nearly universal for the last couple hundred years. The rungs on the ladder can be placed in different locations. In connection with this movement, a lot of people, following Partch's lead, are designing and building instruments to realize scales that are unavailable or awkward on other instruments.

Another trend... We can now hear, with reasonable fidelity, recordings of music from diverse cultures that simply weren't available a generation ago. When you start looking at the instruments from around the world that make the music, you quickly realize how much there is to explore and learn and try.

A somewhat more vague trend... an interest in the nature of sound itself. The reason you can transcribe a Bach fugue in any number of instruments is because what the fugue is about is the relationship between notes. The same cannot be said of the music of John Cage. There are a number

of builders working today whose instruments do not produce controllable pitches and may even be difficult to control in rhythm, volume, etc.. Many people are pursuing diverse sorts of acoustic explorations which are basically aesthetic in their motivation. It's surprising just what good observers of the world our ears can be.

H23: Any insight on experimental music to come?

Bart: The strange, unfriendly hold that mid-20th century highbrow music has had on us has diminished, and one of the things that has arisen (along with a sigh of relief) is an awareness that composition should not always be seen as creating patterns of notes.

Instead, it may be seen as a matter of finding relationships of sound that somehow speak to people. A broad feeling of form in its most general sense is worth a lot more than specific note relationships sometimes.

Creativity and taste in conceptualizing formal approaches is terribly valuable. That's the aspect of the current scene I like and hope will stay around.

Eric Lunde-LLND (booklet, PO Box 93241, Milwaukee, WI 53203)

This 22-page document is the printed equivalent of Lunde's recorded material--with graphics, photos from his performances, and bits of text that evaluate and re-evaluate the human condition. Also included is a discography and a list of his performances. Buy this for your coffee table.

PHOTOSTATIC/
retrofuturism-
#s 34-40 (magazine, ed.
Lloyd Dunn, 911 North
Dodge St., Iowa City,
Iowa 52245)

Photostatic, according to editor Lloyd Dunn, "seeks to create the most appropriate context possible for the viewing of (xerographic art)." As such, his 'zine is always full of complex, minimal, political, humorous, and all other manifestations of that medium. This is testament to the fact that the "culture of the copy" has had a much greater

impact on us than a superficial inquiry might uncover. You'll find articles on xerox and sound work, as well as text involving language, plagiarism, etc., which have been impacted by the advent of the copy.

Offshoots of the 'zine include Videostatic, an annual of video art, Phonestatic, a semi-annual audio document, Radiostatic, which airs on KRUI, Iowa City, and retrofuturism, an extended audio art column contained within the pages of the bi-monthly Photostatic. The -static family is surely a very important resource for all aspects of the machine arts. No. 34, February, 1989. Tim Coats writes on the disintegration of language, Thoughts on NOISE by Miekal And. Bob Gruman analyzes "light" and introduces "alphaconceptual poetry". First excerpt from a press novella, "Popular Culture Is the Walrus of the Avant Garde." Print and audio reviews, and much art.

No. 35, April, 1989. Another excerpt from the "Popular Culture" press novella--

"The dreams of sleep, she said, honestly, have still today been so grossly neglected." "Alternoise", by And--a continuing feature of very interesting meanderings about noise. Geof Huth attempts to give an enlightening, and not-enlightening, account of "Praecisio", which is like a modern mix of "the force" and Zen, or at least as confusing, or nonconfusing. Thomas Wilcox discusses the consequences of personality transformation through "chaos magic". Karen Eliot interviewed by Scott MacLeod--all about the proposed Art Strike. Reviews, et cetera, and of course lots of great xerographic art.

No. 36, June, 1989. Continuation of Geof Huth's "Praecisio". Strange little story by Erik Belgum--"Three weeks later, Frank Red was having some difficulty walking". "Things" by Stephen-Paul Martin is an eight-page piece, blending tidbits of thought with xeroxed paper clips, rubber bands, etc.. Miekal And's

"Altermoise" continued. Thomas Wilcox's "Codes and Chaos" continued. Brad Goins discusses the film "Sylvia" (1975) in his continuing "Overlooked Classics". Tim Coats—another newsletter from The Society to Help People Feel as Good on the Inside as Others Look Like they Feel from the Outside". Another wonderful column on verbo-visual art by Bob Grumman. Reviews, lots of art, and more.

No. 37, August, 1989.

Continuing columns by Thomas Wilcox, Miekal And, Bob Grumman, Brad Goins and Geof Huth. More Art Strike Info. Another "Popular Culture" excerpt. Reviews, art, etc..

No. 38, October, 1989.

Report from the Festival of Plagiarism in Scotland.

Columns by Bob Grumman, Tim Coats, Geof Huth and Thomas Wilcox. More Art Strike meandering and a "Popular Culture" excerpt. Reviews, art, etc..

No. 39, December, 1989.

An art and ads issue. 35 pages of xerographic art from all over the world, bound in a very nice silk-screened cover.

No. 40, December, 1989.

Clarification of Lloyd's position on Art Strike.

Columns by Tim Coats, Bob Grumman and Geof Huth (the most minimal "Præcisio" to date). "On Difficulty in Verbal Visual Art", by Harry Polkinhorn.

"Rotational Situationism", by Al Ackerman.

Geza Perneczky presents a model for understanding elite art, second publicity and anti-publicity.

Reviews and other articles, but no art—it's all in No. 39.

Sound Choice (magazine, PO Box 1251, Ojai, Ca 93203)

This publication of the "audio-evolution network" is crucial for reviews of underground (mostly) music and printed matter. If you don't already subscribe, you'd be stupid not to at least send for a sample (\$3). Review space is given to conventional styles and experimental ones alike—whatever your interests are, you're sure to find fresh material to send for. Nuf said.

Tape Delay (Book, SAF Publishing & Printing Ltd., PO Box 151, Harrow, Essex, HA3 0DH, England)

Although their uniforms have changed, the pitchmen and hucksters of yesterday, pawning their snakeoil and trinkets out of the back of wagons, continue to thrive. Now dressed in suits and ties, the men of business and their coterie of advertising agents strive endlessly for greater market share, refining the techniques of crass commercialism and mass appeal. More insidiously, they continue to mold the attitudes, opinions, wants and desires of others. Lucr is their GOD, and homage is paid accordingly.

In such a world, personal integrity is a rare commodity indeed. Those who attempt to retain a sense of individuality, in how they live their lives and what they choose to do and not to do, are choked by the invisible but omnipresent hand of Wall Street. Most fail to strive for anything more than what is expected of them; it is perhaps no more blatant than in the realm of popular music. The vast majority of recording, production, distribution and (inevitably) sales of music are controlled in the most literal sense by corporations that have little interest in music and much interest in profit. This is, however, no conspiracy. Rather it is simply the production of imminently forgettable music. The chartbuster of today replaced with the smash hit of tomorrow in a persistent cycle of record sales.

From this cesspool have emerged relatively few groups that have through the years steadfastly retained their belief in themselves and their music, and many of their thoughts and ideas are documented in Tape Delay, a collection of interviews, essays, poetry, photographs and art from groups and individuals representing a wide slice of alternative music: veterans of early industrial efforts (*Genesis P-Orridge, Einsturzende Neubauten, Cabaret Voltaire*), gurus of

the underground (Nick Cave, Mark E Smith, Damanda Galas), and misfits that defy categorization (Clint Ruin, Boyd Rice) are all here as well as those swimming in the mainstream (*The The's Matt Johnson, Soft Cell's Dave Ball and Marc Almond, New Order*).

Biba Kopf starts things off with an excellent introductory essay, but the majority of the book is comprised of interviews that explore impressions and beliefs about music, the record industry and the performer's place in the world. Those familiar with the work of these groups will no doubt appreciate the specific questions about previous releases, collaborative efforts and future projects. And most interviews stray into a variety of topics (the numerology of the number 23, William S. Burroughs, creative intuition and spontaneity, the importance of ritual, politics, etc.).

By definition any collection of interviews suffers from disjointedness, but this proves less distracting than expected in Tape Delay due to recurring themes. That is not to say that beliefs are always coincident; different views are constantly presented on the effects of financial success, the ability of a performer to change people's lives, the use of subliminals in music, etc.. Some interviews are excellent, including discussions with Coil, Test Dept., Hafler Trio, Chris & Cosey and Marc E Smith. P-Orridge certainly has much to say, but his interview feels more like a lecture. Even the interview with Swans' Michael Gira is smooth, quite an achievement given previous Gira interviews I've read.

Tape Delay is not however uniformly successful. Interviews of Galas and Thurston Moore are for reasons unknown disappointingly short. Lydia Lunch is cranky as usual and her interview soon descends into bile. Stevo, founder of Some Bizarre, provides little insight into the precarious business of

representing such bands as Psychic TV, Test Dept., etc.. The inclusion of New Order is curious and fails to add to the discussion. Although the art included is complementary (especially the montages by P-Orridge), the poetry and narrative by Gira, Stevo, Henry Rollins, and Lunch are more distracting than inspired.

Such worrisome criticisms aside, Tape Delay is a remarkable collection that updates and expands upon ReSearch's Industrial Culture Handbook. Documenting the thoughts, opinions, motivations and beliefs of those performers who have retained their dignity in the music business, Tape Delay should be of interest to individuals familiar with alternative and industrial music and those who are searching for something more than the vacuity of MTV.

-Joe Metcalfe

Recordings

Arcane Device-Engines of Myth (LP, Recommended Records, available through David Myers, 228 Bleecker St., #8, New York, NY 10014-4420)

Improvisations for feedback within and between time delay electronics, recorded live to tape. I recommend this weighty hunka vinyl as a choice document of Dave's non-musical experimentation. The fact that this prestigious label has tackled the project is testament to his artistic maturation. These 11 tracks fully demonstrate the range of this form—minimal and meditative to chaotic industrial patterns. For more info, there are other reviews and a discourse by Dave in H23 #1.

Big City Orchestra-A Good Time to Start Something New (cassette, Epitapes, PO Box 523, Belchertown, MA 01007)

Here is simple, low-fi music for excising pockets of shit that are discovered existing in the same skin sack as you. This tape has unexpectedly become the soundtrack for most of my free time. Like a pleasant form of malaria or endless opiumsdRobitussinDMadvillocoffeeeverclear upon high fever over the iteration of a regime of boredom; "A Good Time" is talking about layers of repetition, iteration, and duplication working against, for and with eachother and you.

When the opportunity permits, you can open the screen door and listen to this. The familiar distancing effects of repetition are kept in check by a humane controlling mechanism. The tiny, undiscernable voices are there, the pounding, the droning, the unfamiliar sounds, the jarring changes of timing are all in place. The difference? The surface of Neptune is more familiar than our own skin. Seeds and bugs get stuck in your eyes and this guy says there's a right to life. The universal monitor will soon be in place. On the East Coast, I understand that a national pro-cellbacy group has started up.

"**If you would be Loved**" uses a continuous repetition of sound with descending and ascending, occasionally hovering fields of energy. It is centered like a gyroscope and wanders around within a strict plain. I was in a building that was having construction done at this time, and I often heard phrases from this being performed by the workers. "If you would" is the initialization of a fever-sleep and very pleasant, as the fever-world is. The opium milk machine with its fractional corpuscles dripping every two seconds or so gives way to "**You will Enjoy Good Health**". Here the clowns meet with the devil to decide the next trick to play on you, little

man. *Iron Sexless Devil* has the room carefully sponged with disinfectant. He knows the germs splitting apart on the floor will get him in His weakened/weekend moments. He does not allow the weakness; all must become a smooth surface to enfold His will. *The Crew That Never Rests* freshen their greasepaint and return. *Moonface* (the clock) is the first you meet. You think *Moonface* is a fool you use. "**Life to you is a Bold Adventure**" is all hours of the year. Yellow cranes are erected today; white cranes are placed beside them. The network of offices, managers, professionals is not completed until the *Crew That Never Rests* is retired by the lazy ones.

Sex and sleep are two temptations many people face these days. Let's do what we can. Peel back the skin, leaving useful nerves, improving with binary circuits. The disgust is universal. The tissue of lies must be removed and the suit of whitest armor installed. The infant's voice will not be stilled so easily; one final retreat into the fluids and tissues to end the disturbance. "Do you like me-do you like me-hit me."

"**Help will be Needed**". Assistance will not arrive until forty-five to ninety minutes have passed. You will not be accepted by any of the facilities that could help you. Man must take away the angel's harps and put them to work. They're not going to help. You can just sit there and moan; see what good it does you. Oh nice, I like the melodramatic effect. All deaths are suicides and suicide is the greatest sin against the Creation. In a garage in Oregon a 7 year old is punished for stealing; belts and rope are needed. A sawhorse is rigged up for the job. In five hours there is 7 year old pulp come to rest in a garage in Oregon. The rest of us have to detect for him now; another sensor/resonator down before it could transmit! How can we work to end the regime of Ironman?

When the opportunity permits, you can open the screen door and listen to this.
-Peter Willard.

Chris & Cosey-Rise
(single, Play It Again Sam Records, 67 Rue de Cureghem, Straat 1000 Brussels, Belgium)

Listening to Chris and Cosey's latest single, it's hard to imagine that at one time they were part of *Throbbing Gristle*. Once intent on challenging every precept of music, they now seem content to release nothing more than slick dance music. Both "Rise" and side two's "**Hypnotika**" are pleasant enough and stand up to anything on WaxTrax, but there is something vaguely dissatisfying with this pair recording such music. To give her credit, Cosey's voice is strong and peppered with none-too-discreet (but now perhaps predictable) sexual suggestions on both tracks. - Joe Metcalfe

Dave Clark/Walter Drake—"Thought Climatology/Evolution and Everything", "Conceptual Reconnaissance/Recollection" (cassettes, 2805 E. 16th Ave., #5, Denver, CO 80206)

If you're looking for music to "tug you gently out to that mental sea where the conscious and unconscious meet", check these out. Though the new age concepts of theta wave induction and hypnagogic hallucination are nothing new, this improvisational duo builds upon these ideas to develop beautiful, textural soundscapes. I must admit, I almost barfed when I read the enclosed descriptions-I dislike new age. However, this work is quite varied and intriguing to listen to. They even incorporate elements of dischord and noise-a new age no no. "Conceptual Reconnaissance" is a compilation of some of their better mellow pieces, while "Thought Climatology" presents their most advanced sampling explorations.

Nicolas Colline-100 of the World's Most Beautiful Melodies (CD, Trace Elements, dist. by NMDS, 500 Broadway, NYC, 10012)
Nic joins forces with fifteen excellent avant-garde musicians for a series of short duets. A wide spectrum of improvisational styles are set against the sonic textures of Collins' "Instrument"-a trombone-propelled digital noise-transposer. Huh? Whatever it is, it has an incredible range of sound. As usual, he has taken his cue from John Cage—"any sound can be a musical sound". The result is 42 short pieces of free jazz to industrial music. Nic has been using 'homemade' electronics and micro-computers in his performances for years. Having studied with Alvin Lucier and recorded for Trace Elements, Lovely Records, Tellus, Hat Art and others, he's earned the respect of fans in many experimental styles. Featured guests are Peter Crusack, Robert Poss, Ben Neill, Pippin Barnett, Peter Zummo, Christian Marclay, John Zorn, Anthony Coleman, George Lewis, Shelley Hirsch, Davey Williams, Ned Rothenberg, Elliot Sharp, Zeena Parkins, and Tom Cora.

Various—"Colorado" (LP, RRR, 151 Paige St., Lowell, Ma 01852)

An assortment of artists from you know where. All tracks exemplify a more contrived side of experimental music, though they span the range from minimal to noisy. "Before Europe was a Graveyard" by Doll Parts and the untitled Chaffed Chunk track are cut-ups of found and processed sounds-the former has a surreal feel due to otherworldly vocals; the latter is more steril. Rick Corrigan's lengthy excerpt from "Faustfilm: an Opera" moves slowly through minimal phases of sound created by electronics and French horn. Three tracks by Joshua Stevens are also very minimal, perhaps too minimal. The spacey noises almost seem to 'communicate' with eachother, but once

The concept is understood (halfway through one song) there isn't much to retain your interest. Little 'yodor's "Anthrophobia" offers strange electronic percussion as a rhythmic base for other processed sounds that seem to meander and quarrel.

City of Worms presents **Badge!**, a powerful industrial 'beat' thing. This is what the masses should be dancing to! A track by **Human Head Transplant** concludes the album. It sounds very orchestrated, as if part of a bizarre soundtrack.

Floating above the symphonic stuff are intense processed voices that grab you where it hurts. The version I received is an **RRR anti-record**; it comes in an edition of 100 with a hand altered cover and "re-etched" track (which is, of course, not playable). The regular version, in an edition of 500, replaces the anti-track with a tune by **Architects Office**.

Con Demek—"Dogmama" (LP, RRR, 151 Paige St., Lowell, Ma 01852)
Damian Catera and Steve Lombardi exploit the guitar, voice, tapes, various percussion, lathes, sheet metal, et cetera as part of a psycho-rock-post-industrial reevaluation of music. Much of the work here is of the abstract sonic barrage school; their personal signature stems from vocals that are ambient in a real, acoustic (not digital) sense—as if coming from inside an oil drum. You'll also find tracks that apply the aforementioned aesthetic to a rock format. In "Indifference" you can almost see the ghost of Bruce Springsteen through hazy memories of long hours down at the factory. "Watch your head", my personal fave, is Con Demek's interpretation of that funky politico-conscious-noise-dance thang—I've always been amazed by the power of an infectious beat.

Crash Worship ADRV—"The Science of Ecstasy" (cassette & booklet, **Rocco Fresco Productions**, 1949 Riviera Dr., Vista, CA 92084)

Find here an intent to "create a non dogmatic environment in which mystical experience is possible, full of intense emotions and extreme actions."

Find here brutal, ritualistic, percussive music recorded live at **Life on the Water Theatre**, Gilman St. Warehouse, and 455 10th St. (San Francisco) in late '88 and early '89. Their unique combination of primitive devices and contemporary sound sources and effects implants images of tribal dance and human sacrifice. Those who must categorize might call this "afro-industrial". At any rate, it should appeal to fans of the noisier musics.

Various—"Eat Shit Noise Music" (cassette, RRR, 151 Paige St., Lowell, Ma 01852)

Industrio-grungy muck with vague rock underpinnings. Quite noisy indeed. If you enjoy wading through layers of low-fi banging, scraping, screaming and instrumental torture, this one's for you. This compilation of Japanese loves features **Hanatarash**, **Boredoms**, **White Hospital**, **Geroergegege**, **Ruins**, **Grim**, and **Dissecting Table**.

All songs here are previously released, but the massive cost of Japanese imports has prevented most of us from hearing them. Noteable tracks are... "My Dad is Car" by Hanatarash, which has more of a concrete collage feel, though the primitive, noisy sound sources are the same; the Boredoms' track "Lick n Cock-BoatPeople" swerves in and out of a bizarre rock format with abrupt dives into torturous noise—the effect is a tolerable nausea; "Bit My Bollocks", also by Boredoms, features

screamed vocals and a funky industrial groove similar to some **Esplendor Geometrico** I've heard; Hanatarash's "Pisshole Surfers" is a tribute to you know who, which pretty much sums up the "theme" of this tape. Notes on the cover read: "We hate Whitehouse", "Fuck Coil", "Suck asshole C93", etc.. The obvious message: there's no noise like Jap noise.

From the pages of Experimental Musical Instruments: Volume IV (cassette, po box 784, Nicasio, CA 94146)

"Unique" is a word used frequently in these pages, so much so that its meaning may become blurred. No one could argue, however, that the music here is not extraordinary, inventive, and at times wildly eccentric. Compared with the instruments played on these twenty tracks, a cleverly used sampler seems as original as a six-string guitar. EMI is a bi-monthly newsletter devoted to unusual musical sound sources, and this compilation presents recordings of selected instruments that appeared in EMI from June '88 through April '89.

Included here are songs using eggshell instruments, ceramic percussion instruments, items made from throwaway objects (hub-caps, jars, fire alarms, etc.), and something called a "photosonic synthesizer", a device that converts light into music by means of a light interrupting disc rotating in front of a photoelectric cell.

The end result is uneven, but some songs succeed admirably, including the track by **Jacques Dudon** featuring the photosynthesizer and the 26-string guitar piece by **William Eaton**. Unfortunately, the quality of sound reproduction is also uneven due to the limitations of the original recordings. A detailed info sheet is included.—
 Joe Metcalfe.

George Fox-CT20889 (cassette, **Poison Plant**, 7 Woodsend Pl., Rockville, MD 20854)

This is primarily quality new age suitable for a label like Windham Hill. Lots of mellow synth harmonies, piano interludes, and asian/african influenced percussive elements. A few tracks stand out by addressing the concept of "future primitive", combining primal acoustic sounds and abstract electronics. If new age is your forte, it probably doesn't get any better than this.

Fragment #1 (cassette/ booklet, c/o ND magazine, po box 4144, Austin, TX 78765)

Fragment is top-notch in concept and result. This satellite project of ND is first in a series to present two sound artists at a time.

Featured here are **J. Greinke** and **Pierre Perret**, and interviews with both. Because music like this is often difficult to 'read', background info and artistic intentions aid considerably in understanding and enjoying the sounds.

Greinke's work here is minimal and ambient, while Perret's "Gala, La Terre" is a long concrete piece. Both warrant your attention.

Editor **Daniel Plunkett**'s future plans for Fragment include **Dave Prescott**, **Frederick Lonberg-Holm**, **Damian Bisciglia**, **Zan Hoffman**, and much more.

Richard Franecki-She Just Goes a Little Mad Sometimes (cassette, Generations Unlimited, 199 Strathmore #5, Brighton, Mass 02135-5210)

A recent tape release by a respected innovator and keyboardist for F/I. His sources here are synths, guitar and digital delay, with which he constructs a spacey environment all his own. The pieces lack musicality in the sense of melody, etc., though they often fuse into recognizable rhythmic structures. When a generally abstract recording comes together nicely, as this one does, it invites considerable creative imagery on the part of the listener. These tunes, mostly pensive rather than rowdy, gave me impressions of futuristic lifestyles as affected by the construction of gigantic space stations—you get the picture.

Gragorian George-In Phase Shift Reality, The Aluminum Bible (two cassettes, **Violet Glass Oracle Tapes**, 6230 Lewis Ave-Lot 105, Temperance, MI 48182)

At times George is similar to Negativland in their humorous(?) method of exhibiting christians, commie haters and the like (though not that obvious). At times a repetition of text and/or instrumentation takes over in what might be likened to a

discordant, less academic equivalent of Phil Glass' "Einstein on the Beach". However, those of you who loathe fifteen minutes of 'It could be Franky it could be very fresh and clean it could be...' can sleep well tonight—the repetitive elements here appear, develop and descend within a couple minutes. Works such as these, and Steve Reich's "Different Trains", have lead me to the conclusion that a "new repetition" is emerging in contemporary music. If you enjoy synthesized meandering, cut-up found sound, and a daily dose of the repeated note, you'll surely enjoy either of these tapes.

Randy Greif—"Bacteria and Gravity" (LP, RRR, 151 Paige St., Lowell, MA 01852; contact Randy Greif at po box 199, Northridge, CA 91328)

Q: What is surrealist music?
A: Read Randy's discourse in this issue and send for a copy of this LP. This is the first solo record from this veteran tape/compilation artist who calls his sound "the dirty underbelly of new age." Most of the work has African/Asian percussive undertones, though "world music" never sounded quite like this. Randy's signature is a brilliant use of sampled/processed voice and a huge array of instrumentation. Played through headphones at high volume, these tracks get right in your head and force pleasant (and painful) questions about the nature of reality. "Gravity" is practically a surrealist orchestra, taking all of side two to develop. This album is bizarre yet familiar, primitive yet modern, which is part of what surrealism is all about.

Randy Greif-Shadow Traders (cassette, Swinging Axe Productions, PO Box 199, Northridge, CA 91328)

Greif plays all of the instruments on these tracks, and on the whole he has succeeded in creating a seamless collage of austere beauty. The foundation upon which

most of the songs is built is a sparse rhythmic of electronic percussion. Greif then adds found sounds, sampler doodles, lush synth, etc.. Deceptively simple after a quick listen, these compositions are in fact quite complex and structured. Noteworthy tracks are "A Lot Like You", "A Man Described by Others", and Example 25". -Joe Metcalfe.

Honeymoon Production—"Manipulation Muzak" (vinyl, RRR, 151 Paige St., Lowell, Ma 01852)

I could say whatever I wanted to about this product and you'd have to take my word for it, since the edition is limited to 100 copies and probably sold out. The intangibility of this "anti-record" lends itself to a great deal of philosophical or down right imaginative description, but I'll give you the straight forward. What we have here is a "vinyl biscuit"—a thick black glob of nothing—and instructions on how to make your own record with an oven, a couple iron plates and a common roofing

nail. In the "liner notes" the artist states, "...when people are deceived, suddenly they don't protect themselves. Their defenses are dropped. So it's the ideal moment to send some disturbing concept in." Obviously "concept" holds the emphasis here—people will argue whether this is a "product" at all. To keep an open mind here is to accept the fact that artistic intentions are as important as the end result. With that attitude, this "Vinyl biscuit" sounds like the 4'33" of the 90's.



Genesis P-Orridge, 1987

courtesy of Tape Delay/SAF Pub.

Illusion of Safety-In 70

Countries (cassette, Complacency Productions, PO Box 1452, Palatine IL 60078)

Several years ago, P.G. Zimbardo, Professor of Psychology at Stanford University, conducted an experiment during which a group of student volunteers were arbitrarily divided into 'prisoners' and 'guards'. The prisoners were confined to cells in the basement of the Psychology dept.. As the experiment progressed, the guards lost themselves in the power they possessed, eventually becoming so abusive, both physically and verbally, that the experiment was halted. Zimbardo was harshly criticized for letting the trial get out of hand, and rigid standards were developed to prevent future tests from going to such extremes.

Illusion of Safety's 'In 70 Countries' picks up where Zimbardo left off. Utilizing electric slabs of ambient noise and dialogue from a variety of sources and situations, I.O.S. has recorded, in their own words, 'an unbiased observational documentary about torture' (see their interview in H23 #1). They explore terrain most fear to tread: the chaos of a Belfast street riot, the experience of a torture victim, a harrowing description of Zimbardo's experiment. They add to this layer upon layer of mesmerizing and at times discordant industrial improvisation. The powerful spoken testimonials and scenarios relegate the music to soundtrack status, but given the content of the message, this is perhaps inevitable. Taken as a whole, 'In 70 Countries' is a riveting glance into the dark world of the extremes that lie dormant in all of us.

-Joe Metcalfe.

E. Lunde-Operative (cassette, Big Body Parts, 3031 E. Plate #2, Colorado Springs, CO 80909, released with permission of N4300 W8752) Dissonant post-modern poetry by way of Harley

Davidsons and feedback. Need I say more? Utilizing a backdrop of grumbling, pulsating noise, this collection of early releases and live performances explores a variety of TEXT (ural) situations. For the most part, the spoken words are rendered incomprehensible by a variety of techniques (distortion, tape speed adjustment, etc.)--you might call this 'voice-as-instrument'. The liner notes and the occasional audible vocals generally denounce out-dated and idiotic social codes. Topics of interest here are AIDS, corruption, control, etc.. Within the realm of industrial/post-industrial music, it's often difficult to explain why a piece stands or falls. Such is the case here. In my opinion, 'Operative' works well, but those with a broader base of knowledge may decide that it lacks innovation.

Eric Lunde-XCHdX: the Terrain of Prophecy (LP, Alamat Records, PO Box 1444, Colorado Springs, CO 80901)

This is the soundtrack to Lunde's metal-fabrication-and-construction/installation-grafted-metal-flesh-soil-kinetic-performance last January at Walker's Point Center for the Arts in Milwaukee. Mostly industrial drones, rhythmic, mechanical ticks and thuds, and distorted vocals that sound like an audio version of shooting back pains. I like it. A lot. There is an art to this type of work--a restrained use of noise as a metaphor for the contemporary human condition. Not everyone pulls it off as well. Side two has one short track with a loop groove, which conveniently prevents the needle from running into a beautiful etching scratched into the vinyl (a man pierced with hooks, suspended from ropes, and ultimately from himself). The package also includes a small silk-screened image, postcards and liner notes from the performance.

Lustmord-Paradise Disowned (LP, Side Effects Records, 28 Ivor Place, London NW1, England)

The world of B. Lustmord is one of gothic cathedrals and bottomless caverns. Filling the void somewhere between Gregorian Chant and a stripped down Test Dept., 'Paradise Disowned' is a provocative release. Recorded in such unusual locales as caves and the Crypt of Chartres Cathedral, this album is unfailingly engaging and varied. Minimalistic compositions grafted with primordial rhythmic hemorrhages. Lustmord, et al., utilized a variety of conventional and unique instruments, including noise and rhythm generators, gongs, pipes, spoken voice, and sundry mechanical tools. The liner notes indicate that portions of the album are in fact deep sea recordings. The result is something akin to music for pagan rituals. Highly recommended.

-Joe Metcalfe.

Merzbow--"Severances" (cassette, Discordia/Concordia, 51 Center St., Patchogue, NY 11772)

Industrial strength noise with occasional passages of extremely fuzzed-out rock. **Masami Akita** of Japan has been doing this for quite a while, so his chaotic collages never lose an underlying continuity and direction (comparable to some of the wilder free jazz). Brilliantly executed guitar and drum segments hint at the likes of Motorhead and Hendrix, though Jimi might roll over in his grave upon hearing Akita's version of "Wild Thing". The sound sources are rock instruments, tapes, turntables, electronics, shaver motors, bowed-instruments, etc.. Check it out--with Jap prices as high as they are, you should never pass up a domestic release. -Joe Metcalfe.

Robert Musso- Absolute Music (cassette, MU records, 111 4th Ave. #5A, New York, NY 10003)

The underlying concept here is a good one: to find out what can be created using only electronically treated stringed instruments (guitar, lute, koto, lap steel, mandolin, etc.). Beyond concept, however, this

release does little to broaden any musical horizons. Musso's technical prowess is without question, but there's no creative nourishment here. Just hip new age music. Good for entertaining when your more conservative friends come to visit, but that's about all.

Various-The Myths Collection, Part One (CD, Sub Rosa, Box 808, CM 1000 Brussels, Belgium)

You'll recognize many of the contributors to this impressive compilation: **Controlled Bleeding's Paul Lemos** and **Joe Papa**, **Hula**, **Eyeless in Gaza's Martyn Bates** and **Peter Becker**, **Genesis P-Orridge**, and **SPK**, to name a few. Part of Sub Rosa's ongoing effort to release music of diversity and integrity, this stands out not only for the people represented but also for the variation of the music. The journey begins with **Mark Stewart & Maffia's** frenetic cut-ups and ends with the stark beauty of Tibetan ritual music. Although most tracks are successful (**Hula's "Torn Silk"** excepted), **SPK's "In the Dying Moments"** and the **Becker/Bates track "Sun-Like-Gold"** are notable stand outs. The **William S. Burroughs** and **Martin Olson** collaboration is worth the price alone--a stark composition framed around the cut-up voice of Burroughs reciting **"The Five Steps"**. **The Camberwell Now** and **Steven Brown** are also represented. Complete liner notes round out this excellent release. -Joe Metcalfe.

Nurse With Wound-Alas the Madonna does not Function (LP, United Dairies, 2 Deepdale, Monsell Road, London N42EH, England)

Since their inception, the prolific Nurse with Wound has on the whole recorded challenging music. This album, released two years ago, builds slowly with **"Nil by Mouth"**, a haunting aural landscape of loosely structured spurts of feedback, occasional drum pounding, squirts of

variorum

industrial noise, and spoken/whispered lyrics ("I am wicked and I am the poison/I am the plastic and I am the brave"). Midway through, the track crescendos into a sonic assault of pulsating drums and twisted guitar feedback—a glimpse into the apocalypse. Side two reveals an entirely different Nurse with Wound. Most of "Swansong" consists of a rhythmic tide of advancing and receding surf with shots of diluted noise throughout. But just as the music begins to lull you into a troubled sleep, you are jolted awake by a furious and relentless blast of what can only be compared to amplified high voltage current racing through your speakers. Although somewhat engaging, this track lacks much of the intensity and suspense of "Nil by Mouth".
-Joe Metcalfe.

Pauline Oliveros/Stuart Dempster/Panaiotis-Deep Listening (CD, New Albion, 584 Castro St., #515, San Francisco, CA 94114)
This is live improvisation performed inside a two million gallon hole in the ground. Recorded in an old army water tank in Port Townsend, WA, this is a beautiful, minimal soundscape dominated by smooth, pure reverberation. Due to the droning nature of the instrumentation, it's often difficult to differentiate instrument from instrument and instrument from reverb. Only on "Nike", the last of four long tracks, is a separation more apparent—here metal pieces, conch shells, whistles, etc., create more specific timbres and tonalities. The overall effect is engaging and very meditative (though I'm sure not half as engaging as being there!). Buy this if you're into minimalism, environmental recordings, and that sort of thing.

PBK-Asesino (cassette, PBK recordings, 115 W. 33rd, San Bernardino, CA 92405, co-released on Nihilistic Recordings of Holland in a longer format)
Have you heard those environmental recordings,



produced by new-agers, that document crickets, ocean waves, rain storms, etc.? Those of you who have acquired a taste for industrial noise might obtain a similar sort of environmental effect from "Asesino"—a din of multi-layered distortion suitable for background while studying, doing the dishes, or just relaxing. This tape does not generate a lot of new concepts—there are dozens of artists doing this sort of thing. But very few "noise-makers" are creating food so suitable for contemplation and

relaxation. This tape is almost painterly in structure, like an abstract Pollock or DeKooning. Though this approach may not groove with P.B. Klinger's intentions, it works for me.

PCP/Thessalonians-The Black Field (LP, Silent Records, 540 Alabama, San Francisco, CA 94110)
Using the tools of the industrialists, these five musicians blend elements

of minimalism, free jazz and noise. Could this be crossover music? The work here is at once suitable for labels like Hat Art, New Albion and RRR! The sound sources are primarily metallic and electronic, delicately layered within and around silence. The result is a beautiful, subtle setting of atonal noise, not at all grating or harsh. All experimental music fans should buy this record—it's proof that preconceived barriers such as academic vs. underground and avant-garde vs. industrial are slowly disintegrating.

Steve Reich- Different Trains
(CD, Nonesuch, available in stores)

'Acadamians' are calling this an important new direction in music. Actually, the seeds of this music have been sown, by Reich himself in the 60's, and by Scott Johnson and half a dozen others in the 80's. This piece is the climax of exploration into instrumental music generated by speech recordings. Sampled vocal snippets of people reminiscing about trains become the food for imitation by a string quartet (**Kronos Quartet** on this recording). Prerecorded train sounds are added to create the finished work. If you enjoy Reich's pulsating, repetitive style, you can't miss with this--perhaps his most contextual work. Also included on the CD is **Electric Counterpoint** (for Pat Metheny), which is part three in a series where soloists play against prerecorded tapes of themselves. It has a jazzier, more accessible feel than much of Reich's work, which makes it a good place to start for those unfamiliar with his music.

Conrad Schnitzler/Gen Ken Montgomery-
Gen/Con: New Dramatic Electronic Music (LP, GEN-CON productions, 118 E. 4th St., #11, New York, NY 10003)

The pieces here are finely tuned works of art--the interrelationship of experimental structure and traditional rhythm and melody at its best. Pulsing and/or harmonious under-drones create works of monumental proportions. Sampled voices add a touch of dreamlike surrealism. Precise, crystalline electronic sounds bubble at the surface to create a delicate but tasty spice and give the tunes a little more contrast. Sometimes abstract, sometimes very 'song-like', at once new and accessible. Recommended.

Tentatively, a Convenience--"November 21 '87EV to April 16 '89EV" (cassette, Widemouth Tapes, po box 382, Cr(ater), Baltimore, MD 21203)

This is fré jazz, basically. The first listening reveals slightly muddy recordings of chaotic live improvisation. Repeated listenings, however, are more rewarding, as you discover the specific modes of operation represented here. The tracks on side one present small ensembles (guitar, bass, percussion, misc. objects) combining collective improv and vague rock rhythms. Side two is much more complex, ranging from Braxton-like whirlwinds for lots of instrumentation to lazy, surreal pieces ('round midnight on LSD?). All in all, this is a hefty sketchbook of above average improv.

Triptic of a Pastel Fern-depite transience (cassette, Poison Plant, 7 Woodsend Pl., Rockville, MD 20854)

Electronic music on metal cassette (not just any metal cassette, but those heavy TDK metal-shell jobs--impressive for a home taper). A variety of good passages can be found here, from surreal dissonant ones to tribal jams to operatic vocal parts. They contain subtle traces of synth noise and distorted voices, and their just long enough to fully develop. A nice array of both accessible and experimental sounds.

Un Drame Musical Instantane--"sous les mers"
(CD, GRRR, 63, Boulevard de Menilmontant, 75011 Paris, France)

In 1948, a French chap named Pierre Schaeffer first coined the term *musique concrete* to describe his own groundbreaking work. The most

prolific concrete music has always originated in France, and today, groups like **Un Drame Musical, Etant Donnes**, etc. continue to evolve at the forefront of the genre. Translation of the liner notes of *sous les mers* reveals there is much more to this group than incredible jazzy concrete collages. As if that wasn't enough! This CD documents extended works for opera, ballet and film.

Jules Verne's parable of the human dream is explored to its fullest in **"20,000 Leagues under the Sea"**, a suite in five movements. This piece was produced by the **Peniche Opera, Stage 3**, and **Un Drame**, and performed live on a canal barge with elaborate props and choreography. Trumpet, flutes, electric guitar, cello, processed voices, and eerie underwater sounds advance, meander and retreat in this powerful composition. This is not background music, as the shifting scenery constantly demands your attention.

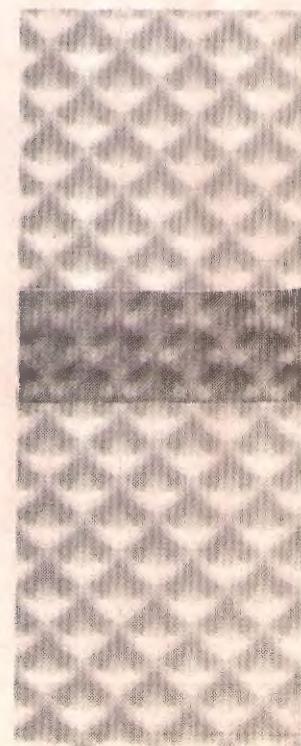
"Scarlet", inspired by **Gabriel Faure**, was created at the **Opera de**

Lille in conjunction with the **Jean Gaudin ballet**. The overall sound is much more synthetic than **"20,000 Leagues"**. The 'scenes' retain a certain characteristic degree of chaos, but the mood is generally more pensive and 'considered'.

"Wake the Sleepwalker" is a collection of pieces created for **"Traces"**, a film series by **Patrick Barberis**. These six short works reveal **Un Drame** at their most surreal, blending a variety of traditional musics with found and processed sounds. The style and instrumentation is very diversified--the result is something like a heavenly recollection of life on earth. This is highly emotive music.

Various-Vhutemas
Archetypi (LP, Side Effects Records, 28 Ivor Place, London NW1, England)

Things start off slowly on the first track of this compilation due to heavy-handed treatment by Yugoslavia's **Laibach**. Their second track, **"Neue Acropolis"**, is slightly better, with horns and a Swans-like beat accompanied by Yugoslavian (I suppose) ranting. **Hunting Lodge** fails to turn things around; they sound like a cross between Front 242 with second hand equipment and early Peter Gabriel. **Gerechtigkeits Liga** completes the side with a creative track entitled **"Five Skandhas"**, rhythmic pounding overlayed with tribal chant. The two **SPK** cuts that open side two are the best the record has to offer. Both **"Invocation"** and **"Psalms crossed in Sorrow"** were previously released on their **"Zamia Lehmanni"** album. Tibetan drums, steel bowls, marimbas, African flutes, and a choir are put to excellent use. After another **Gerechtigkeits Liga** song, the album closes with two tracks by **Lustmord**, **"Mass"** and **"Permafrost"**. The compilations definite lack of split carries over and Lustmord sounds clearly uninspired here.
-Joe Metcalfe.





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